

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT MARTIN

CAMPUS SCENE

ALUMNI MAGAZINE

VOLUME LXI SUMMER/FALL 2016



You Never Walk Alone

Six UT Martin alumnae give advice on life after graduation

Story on page 44



CHANCELLOR'S CORNER

Dr. Robert Smith, *UT Martin Interim Chancellor*

The past year has been a time of tremendous change at UT Martin. From a new campus attitude on accreditation and student assessment to the funding of new academic and creative buildings, big things are happening at your alma mater.

The evaluation team from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges will visit campus just before homecoming to review our accreditation status. We are confident they will find ample evidence of data-driven decisions and a marked improvement in our assessment procedures and materials.

Our Department of Engineering is planning to add Tennessee's first undergraduate-level concentration in manufacturing engineering to help fill a statewide industry need. In support of this and other STEM-based academic areas, we have plans to construct a new Science and Engineering Building as well as a product innovation facility, affectionately nicknamed "The Garage." These new facilities will give our graduates a leg up on the competition with high-tech training and hands-on, real-world experience working with local industry leaders.

We are also expanding our reach to underserved areas with the addition of the UT Martin Somerville Center. Gov. Bill Haslam visited the new site in July to present \$1.125 million in both recurring and one-time funding to jump-start the new center. The Somerville location gives UT Martin a back door into the Memphis area and stands to become the largest UT Martin center when the facility is complete.

The four finalists for the position of UT Martin chancellor have visited campus and generated faith in the security of our future. We are confident the person chosen to lead this university will advance UT Martin's potential.

With no small measure of emotion, Ramona and I will leave here reminded of how special friends are in this region. We are grateful for the privilege to return here to work alongside amazing people who are focused on achieving the best for our students, our region and our alumni.

Best wishes,

Dr. Robert M. Smith

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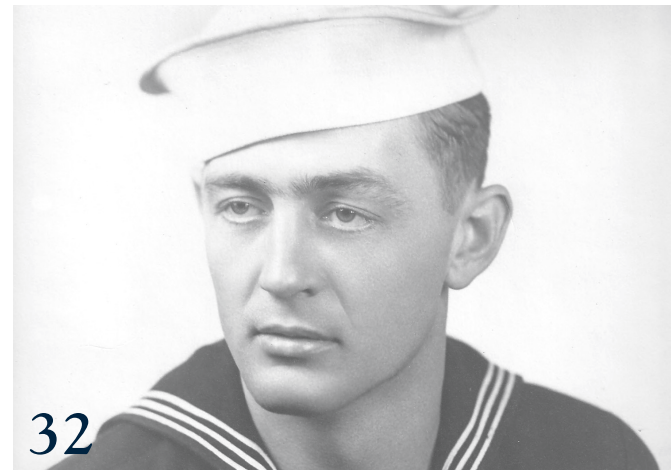
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the **big** picture



WALKING TALL >>> Dr. S.K. Airee, professor of chemistry, carried the ceremonial mace during the May 2016 commencement exercises. Airee is currently UT Martin's longest-serving faculty member with 51 years in the classroom. <<<<



CAMPUS SCENE

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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT >>> Drs. Sandy and Joey Mehlhorn

*Department of Agriculture, Geosciences,
and Natural Resources*

Drs. Joey and Sandy Mehlhorn did not intend to make higher education their career, but now they can't imagine doing anything else.

"It was not until I finished my master's degree that I realized that teaching and working at a university was a great opportunity to impact agriculture on a much larger scale," said Joey.

Sandy stumbled upon teaching as well and fell in love with the profession after serving as an adjunct professor at Middle Tennessee State University.

"The students make it fun. I miss them in the summer," she said.

From Tennessee to Oregon, the Mehlhorns have lived in many different places, but UT Martin has been their home since 2003. Both are faculty members in the Department of Agriculture, Geosciences, and Natural Resources. Joey holds the Parker Chair of Excellence, is interim chair for the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences and serves as director of the Tennessee Governor's School for the Agricultural Sciences, while Sandy is the land surveying and geomatics certification coordinator. They advise several student organizations and often travel with student groups.

"I like UT Martin because you are allowed to focus on your teaching craft and be involved in (your students') lives," said Joey. "It's a close-knit community."

Agriculture is very important to the Mehlhorns, and they have made it their goal to educate students and encourage everyone to be an advocate for agriculture.

Together they are a dynamic duo and a valuable part of the Skyhawk family.

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noteworthy



UT Martin students are shown participating in the 2015 “Meet the Firms Day,” hosted by the College of Business and Global Affairs, to help them network with professionals and practice their interview and interpersonal skills. UT Martin business programs continue with full accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International, as of April 29.

UT MARTIN MAINTAINS AACSB BUSINESS ACCREDITATION

>>> UT Martin has maintained its business accreditation from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International, as confirmed April 29. Founded in 1916, AACSB International is the longest-serving global accrediting body for institutions offering undergraduate, master’s and doctoral degrees in business and accounting.

AACSB accreditation is the mark of excellence in business education and has been earned by less than five percent of the world’s business programs.

“It takes a great deal of commitment and determination to earn and maintain AACSB Accreditation,” said Robert D. Reid, executive vice president and chief accreditation officer of AACSB International. “Business schools must not only meet specific standards of excellence, but their deans, faculty, and professional staff must make a commitment to ongoing continuous improvement to ensure

that the institution will continue to deliver the highest quality of education to students.”

The UT Martin College of Business and Global Affairs offers bachelor’s degrees in business administration, political science and international studies, as well as a master’s degree in business administration.

“This national validation of our business programs would not have happened without a strong faculty, supported by an effective leadership team, within the College of Business and Global Affairs,” said Dr. Jerald Ogg, UT Martin provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs. “AACSB accreditation sends a message that our students are graduating with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed, and I am delighted to end this spring semester with a ringing affirmation that quality matters.” <<<

PAUL BLAYLOCK ADDRESSES SPRING GRADUATES AT COMMENCEMENT MAY 7 >>> Dr. Paul Blaylock ('68)

delivered UT Martin's spring commencement address May 7 before more than 700 students – the largest graduating class in university history – received their degrees and were welcomed into the family of UT Martin alumni around the world.

Blaylock emphasized the importance of friendships and lifelong learning. "You're graduating from one of America's finest universities, which has prepped you for life," he said. He also used his remarks to impart a few words of wisdom from a "friend" – author and philosopher Henry David Thoreau.

"Know thyself," he said. "It's very important that you establish what your values and your boundaries are, and live your life within those. Don't let anyone else influence you to go beyond your values and your boundaries."

"Simplify your life. . . . Don't be discouraged in bad times, but use it as an opportunity to grow," he continued. As both a trauma doctor and trial lawyer, Blaylock says he has seen all the mistakes people can make with their lives and urged graduates not to take those same paths.

"Live deep. Suck the marrow out of life every day," he said. "Make the best of every day because tomorrow is not promised. Dream high; expand your horizons, and don't be afraid to exceed your comfort zone. Pursue every opportunity to improve your life. Never stop learning. Never stop reading."

He closed with a few pieces of advice from his own life, encouraging graduates to believe in their own abilities, be prepared to learn from failure, strive for excellence and never go a day without a smile or a laugh. "Go confidently in the direction



Dr. Paul Blaylock encouraged UT Martin graduates to "know themselves" and follow their ambitions during commencement exercises May 7 in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.

of your dreams, and live the life you have imagined," he said, quoting Thoreau. "Go forth into the world and make us proud, and remember, always come home to UT Martin."

Blaylock received a Bachelor of Science degree in liberal arts from UT Martin before earning a medical degree from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis in 1972. He later graduated from the Northwestern School of Law at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Ore., and has spent the past 40 years serving as both a trauma doctor and a trial lawyer in the Portland area.

Dr. David Millhorn, UT executive vice president, vice president for research and UT Research Foundation president, represented UT President Joe DiPietro and joined interim Chancellor Bob Smith to confer degrees. <<<

UT MARTIN CONTINUES AS A TOP SOUTHERN PUBLIC UNIVERSITY >>> U.S. News & World Report ranked UT Martin 16th among public, southern universities in its 2017 list of the "Best Regional Universities" in the South. UT Martin is also tied for 11th-place among the best public, southern universities for veterans.

In the Southern region, UT Martin shares a 16th-place ranking among public universities with Marshall University in West Virginia and Radford University in Virginia, and is in a five-way tie for 47th-place overall. This is up from the 2016 ranking in which UT Martin tied at number 19 among public southern universities and number 50 overall.

The university is also tied at number 11 among the best public, southern universities for veterans this year (29th overall). UT Martin did not appear on this list in 2016.

The "Best Regional Universities" category compares institutions against their peers across their respective regions. Institutions must offer a full range of undergraduate majors and master's programs in order to qualify. Rankings are calculated based on a weighted score considering graduation and retention rates, faculty resources and student selectivity, among other factors. <<<

noteworthy

PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE WINS INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY SHOWCASE COMPETITION >>>

The UT Martin Percussion Ensemble has won the Percussive Arts Society's International World Percussion Competition in the university showcase category for the first time in school history.

The ensemble will perform at 2 p.m., Nov. 10, during the Percussive Arts Society International Convention held in Indianapolis, Ind. A reception for area UT Martin alumni will be held from 9-11 p.m. that evening.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for both the teachers and the students. My students work exceptionally hard, and I demand so much of them," said Dr. Julie Hill, professor of music and director of the UT Martin percussion program. "For them to be recognized like this on an international stage in front of their peers and percussion heroes from around the world is something none of us will ever forget."

"Winning this competition is a testament to the work we put in and what we learn here at UT Martin," said Nathaniel O'Neal, an

ensemble member from Smyrna. "We spend hours rehearsing and practicing our parts for just one or two performances a semester. Now, I am able to stand with my fellow percussionists and perform with them on one of the largest stages at PASIC."

The UT Martin percussion program is different from those at many other institutions, and Hill believes that difference is part of what makes her students stand out from those in other ensembles.

"Many groups focus on one area and have a separate world music ensemble from their traditional percussion group. At UT Martin, we are all the same group, so students here experience everything from contemporary percussion music to historic and world music," she said. "I try to make their experience as diverse as possible, ... so we present a very unique and diverse program executed at a very high level. I think this diversity is something (competition judges) rarely see, and they recognized and rewarded that."

"In the UT Martin percussion studio, you really get to hone your craft and learn everything there is to know so that you are



Pictured after a performance at Discovery Park of America in Union City are UT Martin Percussion Ensemble members (front row, l-r) Andie Fisher, of Franklin; Paul Zacarias, of LaVergne; Jerry Emmons, of Selmer; CJ Barrow, of White House; Trice Mayhall, of Kenton; Stephen Downing, of Hendersonville; (back row) Hohner Porter, of Trenton; Jonathan Tyree, of Nashville; Jenna Kirby, of Nashville; Jacob Hargrove, of Bartlett; Cameron Poythress, of Antioch; Peyton Scott, of Newbern; Nathaniel O'Neal, of Smyrna; Cameron Westbrook, of Nashville; Brandon Blankenstein, of Johnson City; and John Beal, of Medina.

completely ready and prepared to join the workforce," said Hohner Porter, of Trenton. "We strive to not only be the best musicians we can be, but also to be the best people and educators that we can."

The ensemble's performance will present music from Brazil, Zimbabwe, West Africa and Trinidad, among other countries. The concert will also include interdisciplinary elements featuring an appearance by the UT Martin Dance Ensemble, directed by Sarah McCormick, UT Martin associate professor of dance, and background artwork by Lane Last, UT Martin professor of art, and his students.

Those in the Martin area are invited to attend a preview concert at 7:30 p.m., Nov. 6, in the UT Martin Fulton Theatre. Tickets will be sold at this event to offset convention travel costs.

UT Martin students and alumni have a significant presence in the Percussive Arts Society, which recently elected members from around the world to serve in various capacities. Several UT Martin alumni and two current students were appointed to serve in the organization. Hill is the current society president. <<<



Morgan Acuff, a senior from Milan, is pictured in one of the UT Martin nursing practice laboratories.

UT MARTIN NURSING PROGRAM RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION >>>

Genex Services, a provider of managed care clinical services, has awarded the UT Martin Department of Nursing \$20,000 in scholarship funding through its fifth annual Case Manager Scholarship Program.

Each year, Genex Services asks case managers, supervisors and branch managers within the company to nominate nursing programs at colleges and universities that they believe deserve additional funding. Susie Moore, a 1987 UT Martin alumna, nominated the UT Martin program for the award.

"The Department of Nursing at UT Martin has a proud and successful history in nursing education," wrote Moore in her nomination letter. "I am very proud of my alma mater."

Five programs are selected each year, and the funds are intended to "recognize program alumni, strengthen awareness of the case management profession and invest in a new generation of graduates to fulfill a growing industry need." Genex Services focuses primarily on handling workers' compensation claims and managing the care of injured workers.

The UT Martin RN-BSN bridge program was also recognized by College Values Online as a top-10 "best value" program nationally. UT Martin was the only Tennessee program to make this list. <<<

Come for a *fly by*

during our

FALL PREVIEW DAYS

Oct. 29 and

Nov. 12

utm.edu/previewday

noteworthy



Pictured during the check presentation ceremony are (l-r) Ronnie Neill, interim mayor, city of Somerville; Charley Deal, UT Martin associate vice chancellor for annual giving and alumni affairs; Dr. Brian Donavant, interim executive director, UT Martin Office of Educational Outreach; Dr. Jerald Ogg, UT Martin provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs; Kara Tapp, director, UT Martin Somerville Center; Gov. Bill Haslam; state senators Dolores Gresham (R-Somerville) and Mark Norris (R-Collierville).

GOV. BILL HASLAM PRESENTS UT MARTIN SOMERVILLE CENTER WITH \$1.125 MILLION >>> Gov. Bill Haslam visited the former Methodist Fayette Hospital on July 26 to present UT Martin with \$1.125 million from the Tennessee General Assembly to establish the new UT Martin Somerville Center in that location.

The amount matches \$825,000 raised by Methodist Fayette Hospital, the city of Somerville, Fayette County and the University of Tennessee Foundation, and includes an additional \$250,000 in recurring funding added to the state's 2016-17 budget.

The governor emphasized the importance of his Drive to 55 Initiative, which seeks to help 55 percent of Tennesseans earn a degree or certificate by 2025, and cited the new UT Martin center as an important component to enhance access to higher education in Southwest Tennessee.

"Not everybody has a chance to go take four years off their life and move and be a resident on campus somewhere," he said. "Higher education looks different to everybody now. One of the keys is to make certain that it's convenient for people who have

other things going on in their lives. This campus is a real effort to do that."

Ronnie Neill ('73), interim mayor for the city of Somerville, emceed the event and thanked, among others, the city's board of aldermen, the Fayette County leadership and State Sen. Dolores Gresham (R-Somerville) for their efforts to make the project a reality.

"(This project) means everything. We'll have a local outlet for higher education. ... It can change the whole area for everybody," he said.

Kara Tapp ('08), director of the UT Martin Somerville Center, is excited to see the facility become a one-stop-shop for educational needs in the area.

"This has been a long process, and it's been something that our county has dreamed about for almost 10 years. It's finally happening for us. Not only is this site going to be UT Martin, but I believe it's going to be a site for people to come to have any type of educational need met," she said. "Anybody that walks in my door, no matter what their ACT score or their GPA, I want to be

able to help that person achieve their goals for where they want to go for their future, no matter what. That's what I believe this facility will be."

On July 25, the State Building Commission approved a lease between the University of Tennessee and the city of Somerville to house the UT Martin Somerville Center in the former hospital building.

The UT Martin Somerville Center is currently operating from the Somerville Career Center, but administrators plan to move into the new facility in the fall of 2017 following extensive renovations. According to Bob Turner, Somerville city administrator, the building

will be occupied by several potential tenants, including UT Extension and Fayette Literacy.

UT Martin currently offers degree programs in social work, psychology and criminal justice in the area, with other programs projected to follow. Also available is the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies degree, designed specifically to reach adults seeking to complete their degrees or make a career change. The center will also concentrate on job-skill training and meeting the immediate needs of existing and prospective regional employers. <<<



Dr. Tom Blanchard, UT Martin professor of biology

PROJECT FUNDED TO STUDY RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND ECOSYSTEM RECOVERY >>>

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation has awarded Dr. Tom Blanchard, UT Martin professor of biology, a three-year research grant through the West Tennessee River Basin Authority.

The basin authority is responsible for preserving the natural flow and function of the Hatchie, Obion and Forked Deer river basins through environmentally sensitive

stream maintenance. The basin authority's territory covers 20 counties along and between the Mississippi and Tennessee Rivers.

Blanchard, who also serves as director of the Reelfoot Lake Environmental Field Station, plans to study how the restoration of previously channelized streams in West Tennessee affects the physical characteristics of the associated ecosystems. He and his research team will study the biodiversity of affected fish communities by monitoring the types and numbers of fish living in selected streams.

"This is an important project to understand the potential for restoring channelized streams in the region, a productive continuation of the collaboration between Dr. Blanchard and Dr. Fore, and a great chance for students to be involved hands-on in a meaningful research project," said Dr. Jennifer Greenwood, professor and interim chair, UT Martin Department of Biological Sciences.

The \$42,000 grant will fund the study through April 2019. Blanchard is working with Dr. Jeffrey Fore, from the Tennessee chapter of The Nature Conservancy, as co-principal investigator. <<<

Out-of-State?

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for **more** information

noteworthy



Paige Brown, of Memphis, is a member of UT Martin's 2016 nursing class.

2016 NURSING CLASS ACHIEVES 100 PERCENT NCLEX PASS RATE >>>

One hundred percent of nursing graduates from UT Martin's 2016 class passed their National Council Licensing Examinations this year as first-time test-takers. The NCLEX is a mandatory examination to receive licensure as a registered nurse.

"Our goal is always excellence, and I am extremely proud of these students and their hard work and perseverance," said Dr. Mary Radford, associate professor of nursing and department chair. "This achievement is particularly notable due to the challenging nature of the NCLEX-RN. In addition to our signature three years

of clinical rotations, we have rigorous instruction in place that prepares students to approach the licensure exam with confidence."

Students who leave UT Martin with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree complete more than 900 clinical hours in hospitals and health-care facilities across the state and gain experience in surgical, intensive care, maternity, pediatric, geriatric, mental health and emergency units, among others.

"I was definitely prepared through nursing school," said Paige Brown, a member of the 2016 class. "It's a different environment there at UT Martin. The teachers and instructors really prepared us well to take on whatever we might encounter throughout our nursing careers."

Brown, a Memphis native, secured a position as a registered nurse in the progressive cardiology unit at Methodist South Hospital in Memphis before walking the commencement stage in May of this year.

Classmate Marci Petty, of Savannah, is working as a registered nurse in Corinth, Miss. "I am so thankful that I chose UT Martin because I felt much more prepared to be a nurse," she said. "I feel confident in my nursing and critical thinking skills. I was able to have great clinical experiences in many different places. UT Martin definitely helped prepare me for my career."

Students can earn a nursing degree on the main campus in Martin and at the UT Martin Parsons Center. The RN-BSN bridge program for currently licensed nurses is also available through the UT Martin Ripley Center. <<<

APPOINTMENTS AND HONORS >>>

- Cassondra Burks, lecturer of nursing, has earned her wings to serve as a flight nurse with Air Evac Lifeteam. Martin is home to Air Evac Lifeteam 31, which has served northwestern Tennessee, southwestern Kentucky and southeastern Missouri since its establishment in 2003.
- **Dr. Jim Byford ('66)**, dean emeritus of the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, is one of 16 individuals selected to join the national 4-H Hall of Fame for his service and dedication to the organization. The National 4-H Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony is scheduled to take place Oct. 7 at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center in Chevy Chase, Md.
- Dr. Tommy Cates has been selected to serve as UT Martin's Tom E. Hendrix Chair of Excellence in Free Enterprise, effective Aug. 1. The Hendrix Chair of Excellence develops programs and curricula for public schools to promote and encourage free enterprise practices. The position also works to expand entrepreneurial opportunities in the region.
- **Dr. Julie Hill ('94)**, professor of music and director of percussion studies, will serve as principal percussionist with the Paducah Symphony Orchestra beginning with the 2016-17 concert season.
- Dr. Simpfronia "Sim" Taylor is the new director of the UT Martin Ripley Center, effective April 18. Taylor most recently served as director of student affairs at the UT Health Science Center in Memphis, a position she began in 2010.
- Dr. Mark Simmons, associate professor of music, has been named associate conductor of the Jackson Symphony Orchestra.

- **Kara Tapp ('08)** is the new director of the UT Martin Somerville Center, effective May 1. The UT Martin Somerville Center is the newest of five extended campus centers managed by the university.
- **Henrietta Giles ('84)**, lecturer of communications, received the

Salute to Excellence Award during the National Association of Black Journalists' national convention in Washington, D.C. Giles is the director/producer of the film "Reflect, Reclaim, Rejoice: Preserving the Gift of Black Sacred Music," which earned her also a regional EMMY in 2014. <<<



Kassie Hooks (seated), of Fulton, Ky., is one of two UT Martin alumni whose logo designs were selected for this year's No-Till Field Day event in Milan. She is pictured with Sarah Haig, assistant professor of graphic design. Kyle Birdwell (not pictured), of Bruceton, was also selected. Both students are May 2016 graduates.

NEW MILAN NO-TILL LOGO DESIGNED BY UT MARTIN STUDENTS >>>

The logos used at the 2016 Milan No-Till Field Day were designed by UT Martin alumni Kyle Birdwell, of Bruceton, and Kassie Hooks, of Fulton, Ky., both 2016 graduates. This event is held once every two years and is one of the largest crop production field days in the nation.

The logos were chosen as part of a class assignment in cooperation with the AgResearch Center crew, which hosts the event.

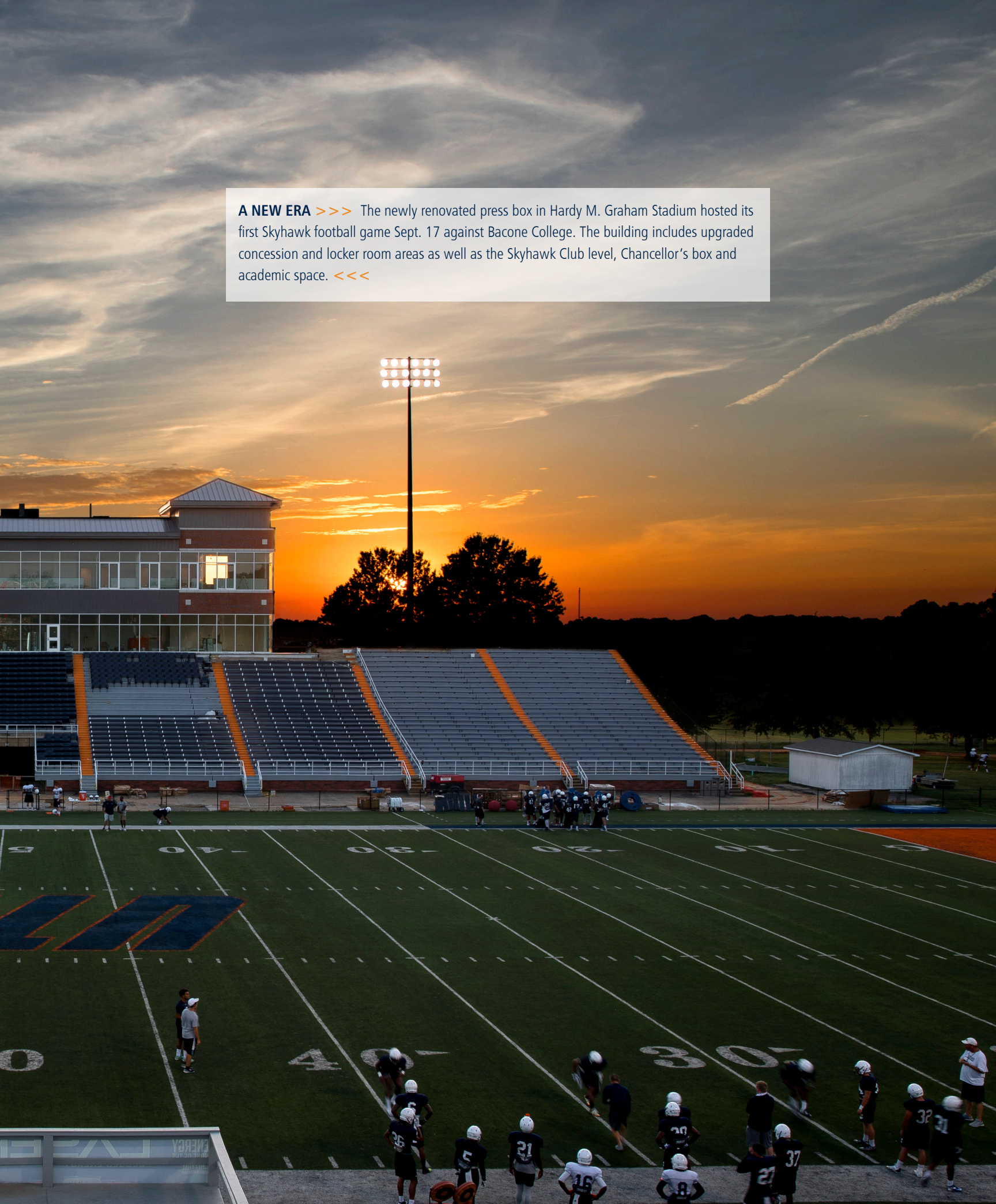
"We like to give our students as much real-world experience as possible, so having them compete for the winning design was a natural next step," says Sarah Haig, assistant professor, UT Martin Department of Visual and Theatre Arts.

"As a student, it's always a moment of accomplishment when something you designed gets produced and is suddenly this real-world thing that you can hold," she said. "I think it was a great opportunity for them, and we would love to do something like this again in the future." <<<

the **big** picture
athletics



A NEW ERA >>> The newly renovated press box in Hardy M. Graham Stadium hosted its first Skyhawk football game Sept. 17 against Bacone College. The building includes upgraded concession and locker room areas as well as the Skyhawk Club level, Chancellor's box and academic space. <<<



athletics

ALEC MILLS BECOMES FIRST UTM BASEBALL ALUM TO PLAY IN A MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL GAME >>>

More than 18,000 men have donned a Major League Baseball uniform in league history. On May 18, 2016, a dream came true for Alec Mills when he toed the rubber for the defending world champion Kansas City Royals and became the first UT Martin baseball alum to play in the major leagues.

Mills rapidly ascended to the big leagues after he was selected in the 22nd round of the 2012 MLB Draft. His path to Kauffman Stadium twisted through minor league stints in Idaho, Kentucky, Delaware, Arkansas and Nebraska before his Major League debut against the Boston Red Sox in front of 23,379 fans.

Mills found out he was going to be promoted to Kansas City's active roster on a bus ride after a four-game series in Springfield, Mo. He immediately called his parents, Joe and Pat, his older brother, Kyle, and his fiancée, Paige Walker, to break the news. However, the update came with a unique caveat.

"They had to keep it a secret until the Royals announced the move," Mills said. "I imagine it was tough on them having to keep that secret."

Mills' father, Joe, was shocked to hear the news, considering his son had spent the entire 2016 season with Kansas City's Double-A affiliate and would be skipping a level to join the Royals.

"When Alec calls rather than texts, we know it is usually something big," Joe said. "I was prepared for him to say he was being promoted to Triple-A. When it finally registered, we couldn't believe it. We had always told him we would be there for his MLB debut – we just didn't plan for it to happen in May."

After Joe, Pat and Paige hustled to make the 500-mile trek from the Mills residence in Clarksville to Kansas City, Mother Nature intervened.

The Royals were set to announce Mills' promotion in time for their May 16 contest. However, the game was rained out, and soon a doubleheader was scheduled for May 18. Kansas City would play its regularly scheduled Tuesday game without Mills before officially proclaiming that he would join the team at around noon on Wednesday.

"That was the longest two days of our lives," Joe said. "We still couldn't tell anyone what was going on. I felt like we were in the witness protection program. Needless to say, when we were able to tell family and friends, it was unbelievable."

Mills arrived on the field Wednesday morning at about 8:30 a.m., anxiously anticipating his role in the twinbill. He met with



Mills (center) is pictured with his parents, Pat and Joe Mills, before a game.

Royals manager Ned Yost and pitching coach Dave Eiland and informed his superiors that he was there to help in any way he could.

Although Kansas City won the first leg of the doubleheader by a 3-2 margin, a total of five pitchers were used to secure the win. After three additional hurlers saw action in the nightcap, the Royals' bullpen phone rang in the bottom of the seventh inning. The former Skyhawk right-hander was summoned to get loose.

"Once the phone rang, I had a feeling it was going to be me because of the situation of the game," said Mills. "It was a whirlwind of emotions that I can't really explain. To tell you the truth, I don't remember a whole lot of warming up to go in to the game."

Wearing jersey no. 63, Mills faced six batters – three of whom would go on to start for the American League in the 2016 All-Star Game. Although he allowed a run, the 6' 4", 190-pound rookie showed why he was ready for the big stage. He threw five different pitches for strikes, recording outs on a four-seam fastball touching 93 miles per hour and a changeup cruising in at 76 miles per hour. He also showed impressive command of a two-seam fastball, curveball and slider that consistently kept the Red Sox hitters off-balance.

Up in the stands, Mills' support group included the original trio from Clarksville, his brother Kyle (who had flown in from Nashville) and his former Skyhawk teammate Alex Boshers (who was playing professional baseball 200 miles away in Wichita, Kan.).

"Seeing Alec come out of the bullpen to face the Boston Red Sox was a moment none of us will forget," Joe said. "It was so surreal seeing your son run on the field with 'MILLS' on the back of his jersey. I still think about it today and can't believe it."

Mills knew he was fortunate to share that experience with those who are closest to him.

"My family means everything to me," he said. "Without them, I wouldn't even have come close to where I am now. They live this dream just as much as I do, and I am very glad they could soak in that moment along with me."

What makes Mills' journey to the top so incredible is that it almost never happened. After an all-district prep career at Montgomery Central High School in Clarksville, Mills was a wide-eyed freshman in the fall of 2009 focusing on an engineering degree. He thought competitive baseball was out of the picture.

"I drove by the field one day when I had just arrived on campus, and some guys were throwing," he said. "I just had that desire to compete at this level, to see what it would take and if I could do it."

Mills contacted Bubba Cates, UT Martin's head baseball coach at the time, and arranged a tryout. After throwing for the Skyhawk coaching staff, he attended practices over the next few days to prove that he belonged. When all was said and done, Mills had made the squad.

Despite his walk-on status, Mills was one of UT Martin's most trusted options during his freshman campaign in 2010. He ranked second on the team with 23 appearances and appeared in exactly half of the team's 24 games against Ohio Valley Conference competition. As a sign of things to come, he was the winning pitcher in each of the first two games of his collegiate career.

Mills followed with a sophomore campaign during a historical 2011 season for the Skyhawk program. He notched seven victories and three saves while making a school-record 30 appearances with the team that later won an OVC Tournament game for the first time in UT Martin history. Fittingly, it was Mills who earned the victory on the mound in that postseason game, just five days after he was handed the ball to start in in the final game of the regular season to clinch the tournament appearance.

Things changed during Mills' junior season at UT Martin after he captured All-Star accolades for the Brazos Valley Bombers in

continued on next page >>>



(from top) Mills is shown pitching a game for the Skyhawks; Mill's official headshot for the Kansas City Royals.

athletics



Mills made his major league debut with the Kansas City Royals on May 18, 2016.

<<< continued from previous page

the Texas Collegiate League during the summer of 2011. After two seasons predominantly pitching out of the bullpen, he was now the staff ace – making a team-high 14 starts in 2012. His first game of the season was an audition in front of several major league scouts in the season-opener at Georgia Southern, ranked no. 34 in the nation at that time. He kept the high-powered Eagle offense at bay, and from that moment forward, the scouts flocked back to watch many more of his starts.

Mills ended his junior season with a top-10 OVC ranking for strikeouts (74, sixth), least walks per nine innings (2.63, sixth), innings pitched (89, eighth) and ERA (3.94, ninth). He was in the middle of a dominant season for the Madison (Wis.) Mallards in the Northwoods Summer League when the Royals made him the third-highest OVC player selected in the 2012 MLB Draft.

Faced with the difficult choice of signing with Kansas City or returning to UT Martin for his senior season, Mills chose to jumpstart his professional hopes and ink a deal with the Royals. He attributes the professionalism of the Kansas City organization as one of the prevailing factors in that decision.

"I count my blessings every day that the Royals gave me the chance they did," he said. "Mostly because of the mentality and

motto of the Royals to not only become the best player we can on the field but be the best person we can off the field as well. College baseball was one of the greatest times of my life, and to be able to share it with the guys I did was an incredible experience that I will cherish forever."

Mills quickly rose through Kansas City's minor league system. He was used primarily as a reliever through his first two seasons before undergoing Tommy John surgery in 2013. He was groomed as a starting pitcher during his rehabilitation process and emerged as one of the organization's top prospects.

A big reason for Mills' success is his ability to keep the ball in the park (only 11 home runs conceded) and not issue free passes (just 54 walks allowed) in 266.2 career minor league innings heading into this year. He also averaged one strikeout per inning in that four-year span, dialing up 255 strikeouts to go along with a 2.94 ERA. As a direct result, he has been named an All-Star at three different levels (Single-A in 2013, Advanced Single-A in 2015 and Double-A in 2016).

Mills' minor league dominance garnered national attention in September of 2015 when he was named Kansas City's top pitching prospect by MLB Pipeline.com, an official branch of MLB.com. Two months later, he was officially added to the Royals' 40-man roster for the 2016 season.

Though the crazy tales of long bus rides, cozy living accommodations and quaint postgame meals in minor league baseball are well-chronicled, Mills has nothing but good memories from his expedition to the big leagues. He says current Los Angeles Dodgers shortstop Corey Seager was the best hitter he faced in the minor leagues. His favorite minor league stop was his stint with the Lexington (Ky.) Legends because the league was "mostly based in the best area of the country – the Southeast." And although he has run into a lot of the faces and names he grew up watching in the game of baseball, he has not been star struck.

For Mills, the key to his meteoric climb can be attributed to the same will and drive he experienced when he drove past Skyhawk Field as a freshman in 2009.

"For me, the key has just been the desire to achieve this dream and play this game for a living," he said. "I'm always trying to get better every day. I try to keep the mentality of not letting anybody work harder than me on any given day and to be the absolute best player that I can possibly be." <<<

UT MARTIN ATHLETICS ANNOUNCES HALL OF FAME 2016 CLASS >>>

The UT Martin Athletics Hall of Fame will gain four UT Martin greats during this year's homecoming festivities. Former football player Don Chapman (2004-07), former soccer player Katie Behrens (2004-07), former tennis player Amy Goff (1992-96) and former athletic trainer Linda Barker (1982-2000) will officially join the hall of fame class of 2016 during a ceremony Oct. 8.

Chapman rushed more than 1,000 yards in each of his four seasons in a Skyhawk uniform, becoming the 14th Division-I player (and only Ohio Valley Conference player) to accomplish that feat. A four-time all-conference honoree, the Marietta, Ga., native was named an All-American in 2006, the same year he helped lead the Skyhawks to their first-ever OVC championship. He ranks no. 1 in UT Martin history in career rushing yards (5,017), single-season rushing yards (1,412 in 2006) and most rushing yards in a game (272 at Southeast Missouri in 2004).

Behrens, a Sioux Falls, S.D., native, is the only Skyhawk soccer player to earn All-OVC accolades in all four seasons and one of only five players in school history to earn All-OVC first team accolades

twice in a career. She led the team in scoring during each of her final two seasons and helped pace UT Martin to its first 10-win season in program history. She also garnered All-OVC Tournament honors in 2007 and ranks in the top-five in school history in games started (73), points (55), goals (22) and shots (244).

Goff was the first tennis player in school history to chalk up All-OVC accolades in each of her four years. She helped UT Martin to a 46-25 overall record and a 27-6 OVC mark during her career, helping the program win its first two OVC championships in 1994 and 1995. The Albuquerque, N.M., native ranks in the top five in program history in combined victories (155), singles wins (83) and doubles wins (72).

A native of Binghamton, N.Y., Barker was an athletic training innovator during nearly two decades of service at UT Martin. She supported and promoted athletics by assessing, treating and working to prevent injuries, while also providing counseling, instruction and guidance to student-athletes. A countless number of her former students are now working as health care providers, as a result of her direction in the classroom and clinical settings. <<<

CELEBRATING A QUARTER CENTURY IN THE OHIO VALLEY CONFERENCE >>>

The 2016-17 athletic season marks UT Martin's 25th year of competition in the Ohio Valley Conference.

A total of eight Skyhawk athletic programs have captured 30 OVC championships (20 regular season, 10 tournament) during this time period. The UT Martin women's tennis team brought home the university's first OVC championship in 1994 and have led the way with six regular season titles since the Skyhawks joined the OVC and NCAA Division-I ranks in 1992.

UT Martin athletics has experienced a championship surge over the last decade, bringing home 23 of the 30 OVC titles since 2006. The Skyhawk women's basketball team alone has earned eight championships (four season, four tournament) since 2010.

The Skyhawks have earned at least one OVC championship title since the 2008-09 athletic year, a streak that has continued for eight consecutive seasons. UT Martin's banner year came in 2011-12, when a trio of programs (soccer, women's basketball and softball) joined forces to win five conference titles between them.

On five different occasions, a UT Martin squad has swept both its regular season and tournament championship in the same season. The Skyhawk volleyball program became the first team to accomplish this feat in 2002, followed by women's basketball

(2011-12 and 2013-14), softball (2012) and soccer (2012).

In the classroom, 1,728 Skyhawk student-athletes have earned OVC Medals of Honor with at least a 3.25 grade point average, and 230 student-athletes have earned perfect 4.0 GPAs. <<<



advancement

If you've followed UT Martin news over the past year, you know we are raising funds for a state-of-the-art Science and Engineering Building – the main campus's first new academic building in more than 40 years. We have until this spring 2017 to finish raising approximately \$6.5 million for this new facility.

However, we realize not all of our alumni are interested in STEM-based areas. Not everyone is interested in the construction of a new brick-and-mortar building. Some would rather invest their money in the fine arts, agriculture, literature, geology or the students themselves who will study in these areas.

Have you devoted your life to the agriculture industry? The College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences is growing fast and will need a new home soon. You can be part of that.

Are you passionate about theatre, music and the visual arts?



Students in these areas have asked for a performance hall to help make UT Martin

a premier destination for fine arts and cultural opportunities in Northwest Tennessee. You can be part of that.

Are you a business professional? The Ned Ray McWherter Institute is training young professionals and entrepreneurs to be the incoming workforce in your industry. You can be part of that.

And we can't forget about the students themselves; they will need financial assistance to finish their degrees in the coming years. You can be part of funding a recurring or one-time scholarship.

Once the Science and Engineering Building is finished and occupied, space will be left in the remaining academic facilities – space that will be filled by growing departments in all areas. You can be part of making sure each step of the journey creates a better, stronger, more capable UT Martin graduate.

There is room for everyone to contribute to a brighter UT Martin future, and we cannot do it without you. Please, visit utmforever.com/giving or contact the UT Martin Office of Alumni Affairs at 731-881-7610 to find out exactly how you can help.

No matter where your passions lie, there is room for you to be involved in the future of your alma mater.

Andy Wilson, Vice Chancellor for University Advancement

UT MARTIN SURPASSES FUNDRAISING GOAL IN FISCAL YEAR 2015-16 >>>

UT Martin has the generosity of new and recurring donors to thank for helping the university surpass its \$4.1 million fundraising goal in fiscal year 2015-16.

Private donations, personal and corporate pledges and estate plans brought the UT Martin fundraising total to just over \$4.2 million. The second annual "Captain's Challenge," held in April, raised almost \$258,000 in five days.

The university received gifts from 6.1 percent of its alumni during the year, which exceeds the national average of 4 percent alumni giving at similar institutions.

"It is amazing how generous people are toward the work of the university," said Andy Wilson, vice chancellor of university advancement. "The loyalty and support have been tremendous, and we will need everyone again to help the university as we look toward building a new Science and Engineering Building, adding a performance hall, increasing scholarship support and renovating buildings to improve the UT Martin student experience."

Initiatives funded during the past fiscal year included renovations to Hardy M. Graham Stadium, the Ned Ray McWherter Institute, academic scholarships and other initiatives to directly support the five university colleges and their various programs. <<<

ALUMNI GIVE BACK WITH CONSTRUCTION OF FOOTBALL PRESS BOX >>> Years after they earned degrees at UT Martin, alumni **Mark Marshall ('79)**, **Rick Searcy ('79)** and **Brian Searcy ('00)** have given back to their alma mater as part of the team with Allen Searcy Builder Contractor Inc.

The trio is part of more than a dozen UT Martin alumni who helped begin the four-story press box upgrade to the Hardy M. Graham Stadium in November 2015. Although there were challenges along the way, the new-and-improved stadium opened in plenty of time for the Skyhawk football team's 2016 home opener against Bacone College on Sept. 17.

"For us, this wasn't a typical project," said Rick Searcy, a Union City native who has been affiliated with ASBC for 25 years. "We do a lot of single-story and two-story buildings, but we don't build many four-story projects. With that said, I'll always remember that it was fun building this place. We have gotten to see a lot of people that we hadn't seen in a while, and it's been easy to get back involved."

The Graham Stadium press box is the latest in a long line of on-campus projects for ASBC. The company, based in Union

City, also had a hand in the Bob Carroll Football Building, the Baseball-Softball Fieldhouse, the first phase of University Village, renovations to the Business Administration Building and Brehm Hall, and window replacements in the Communications Building, Sociology Building, Holland McCombs Center, Andy Holt Humanities Building and Hall-Moody Administration Building.

"We are always on campus doing something," said Brian Searcy, who has been part of the company for 16 years. "It is huge for us to have one of the top-of-the-line buildings on campus. When you come back to a football game and look at the press box, you can take pride in the fact that we were a part of the process."

To be affiliated with the football press box is ironic for Marshall, who has been at Searcy since 2011.

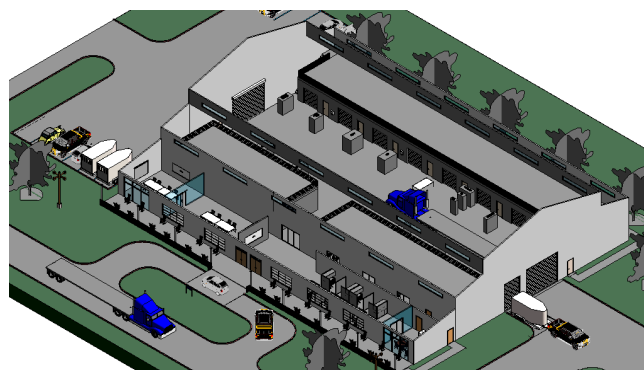
"When I went to school here, I didn't go to a single football game because I was too busy working on my engineering technology degree," said Marshall, a McKenzie native. "It was nothing against athletics, it just wasn't the mindset. So really for me, this is my first involvement. It will be neat to see a football game being televised out of that facility – that in itself will build the prestige of the school." <<<

UT MARTIN PROPOSES INNOVATION AND PRODUCT REALIZATION FACILITY >>> UT Martin plans to add a new facility in the coming years to create workspace where local industry leaders can partner with students and faculty to develop and test new products and ideas. The idea for this facility was originally presented by students, highlighting the need for hands-on experience as part of UT Martin's degree programs.

The proposed facility, large enough to accommodate an 18-wheeler, will provide space for local industry representatives to construct new concepts, develop and test new ideas, and improve upon existing products. This not only gives UT Martin students and faculty an opportunity to assist with product development, it also gives local industries a chance to evaluate soon-to-be graduates and hire highly qualified students straight off the commencement stage.

Read the full story in UT Martin's September news archives at utm.edu/newsarchives. <<<

(right) Pictured are tentative building plans for the proposed Innovation and Product Realization Facility.







*COMING
UNDER
FIRE*

An officer's dedication
to justice and honor

Story by Erin Chesnut
Photos by Raffe Lazarian



On October 27, 2006, the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department received a call from a woman reporting domestic assault. It was the last call of the shift, but it would be far from routine.

Patrol Officer **Danita Marsh ('97)** responded to take the caller's statement. However, while sitting in her patrol car with the victim, she and the young woman were ambushed by the abuser, who had returned to the scene.

"We were just sitting there talking, and the next thing I knew, out of the right side, I saw a muzzle flash, and that was it. Everything went completely black, and I knew that something bad had happened, but I didn't know exactly what it was," said Marsh.

The first of five bullet wounds sent Marsh into shock as the assault continued, and she struggled to respond.

"I knew that I needed to ask for emergency assistance, but my hands would not hit the emergency call button, and I didn't know why. I knew I kept trying to hit it but I couldn't, and what I didn't know was that I had been shot in both arms," she said. "I had tried to key up on the radio, and I actually did key up my mic, but I couldn't speak."

But Willie Lee Lindsey, a previously convicted murderer, wasn't finished yet. He approached the driver's side of the vehicle and pulled Marsh from the car, striking her in the head with the butt of his gun, before turning his attention to his girlfriend in the back seat.

A passing paramedic team noticed Marsh's patrol car unattended in the driveway and doubled back to check on the situation.

"They were the first responders on the scene," said Marsh. "They checked me because I was the most critical, and they said it appeared that I wasn't breathing. There was no sign that I was breathing. And as they were walking off to check the young lady, I took a deep breath. Then they started working on me and called for assistance."

Marsh suffered five bullet wounds, one of which found a weak spot in her Kevlar vest and partially severed her spinal cord, paralyzing her from the waist down.

"I remember trying to stay alert, even though I couldn't see anything and really couldn't feel anything. I knew something bad was happening. So I was trying to stay alert, and I was counting. I kept drifting off," said Marsh. "Some of my coworkers on the scene told me they could hear me counting. I thought I was counting in my head, but apparently I was counting out loud. When I was transported in the ambulance, they were counting with me trying

to keep me alert.”

Lindsey fled the scene before responders arrived and ultimately led officers on a car chase through several counties before crashing his vehicle. He later pled guilty to assaulting Marsh and several other charges, which collectively earned him 132 years in prison. The young woman involved was less severely injured and recovered from her wounds.

Marsh spent more than a month recovering at the Vanderbilt Stallworth Rehabilitation Center in Nashville before being sent to the Shepherd Center in Atlanta, Ga., the following spring.

“They (at Stallworth) were just there to take care of me, but when I went to Atlanta, that’s when I started to learn how to take care of myself,” she said.

Her son, Aaron, was nine years old at the time of the attack, and Marsh says she worked hard to keep his life as normal as possible.

“Aaron is athletic and was really big in sports, so I kept him in sports. I wanted his life to be as normal as possible. It was really a point of making sure he understood that he was a kid, he had his childhood,” she said. “So we had to make sure we kept those lines fully intact where he didn’t feel like he had to stop his life to take care of me. That was not going to happen. I didn’t want that to happen; I wanted him to live. I wanted his life to be normal, so it was business as usual.”

Marsh, who uses a motorized wheelchair and drives with hand controls, still attended all her son’s basketball and football games. When the playing areas were not wheelchair accessible, other parents would film the action and make her a DVD to view later.

“The community rallied around me when I was injured. It’s 10 years later, and I still have people who remember and who are so positive and supportive,” said Marsh.

Marsh came to UT Martin in 1994 with little idea of how her future would pan out.

“I didn’t know what I wanted to major in when I went to Martin, but my personality and my interests were always to fight for the underdog. I always felt like there were so many things going on in the world and so many people who didn’t have a voice, and I wanted to be that voice,” she said. “I took a criminal justice class and the information came to me so easily, and I understood it so well, that I decided that was what I needed to be doing. That was my opportunity to be a voice for others.”

Marsh originally wanted to go to law school, and pursued a master’s degree in criminal justice administration from Tennessee State University after graduating from UT Martin in December of

1997. With six hours left in her degree, however, she made yet another career change.

“I wanted the real-life, hands-on experience, so I took some time off to go to the police department and be a police officer,” she said. “My best friend, who works with the police department in Memphis, told me, ‘You can do this. This is where you need to be; this is where you can make the biggest difference.’” She turned out to love everything about being on the force.

“From meeting members of the community to helping people who were in distress, foot chases, car chases, we had some of those, too. It was midnight calls from the senior citizen who heard a noise and just wanted an officer to walk through her house and property... it was everything,” said Marsh. “I’ve pushed cars out of the road. I’ve taken people to go get gas for their cars; I’ve moved deer that were hit and injured. Police officers do it all. There’s no limit or list of ‘this is what your job description is’ and you only do that. You do whatever is required.”

After her injury, Marsh decided not to continue with her administration degree and instead completed an online program in criminal justice studies through Southern New Hampshire University. She started over with zero transfer credits and received her master’s degree in 2014.

Marsh currently works as a victim/offender mediation coordinator through the Nashville Conflict Resolution Center, a position she has held since 2011.

“I mostly coordinate cases and make sure we have everything lined up before we take it to mediation. I mediate quite often, but not all the cases. A lot of the time I’m interviewing a party, and I don’t want there to be a bias,” she said. “I contact the parties and convince them that mediation is a really great way to resolve (their complaint). Our society is big on punishment. ... We try to get people away from that and say, ‘Hey, we can work this out.’”

Victim/offender mediation involves an unbiased third party who can keep conversation moving in a disagreement and keep minor offenses away from the primary court system.

“Mediation is less expensive and quicker than the court. Parties actually have a say-so about how their case is going to turn out,” Marsh explained. “The community benefits from mediation because there are less cases clogging up the court system ... which means other cases can get in quicker for more serious crimes.”

There are many mediation types, including juvenile cases, civil court, neighbor disputes and corporate law, but Marsh has a particular area of expertise. “I feel like I can really relate to victims

from so many aspects, as a police officer and someone who investigated allegations of crime, to being a victim myself. So victim/offender tends to be my niche," she said.

In addition to her position with the Nashville Conflict Resolution Center, Marsh is also back in school and following her original path to become a lawyer. She is currently a second-year law student at the Nashville School of Law and plans to graduate in 2019. While she is certainly most familiar with criminal law, she is keeping her options open and has considered going into entertainment or real estate law.

Regardless of her ultimate focus, Marsh knows she wants to use her education and experience to benefit her community and the people she comes into contact with every day, a charge she accepted while still at UT Martin.

"UT Martin is where I understood that there is a responsibility

that comes along with education. You're young, you think you're going to college so you can get the big house and drive a nice car ... yes, but there is also responsibility that comes along with that," she said. "You're called to action once you're educated. Your action is to help your community. Martin is where it stopped being about myself, and it became more about what I can do, how I can educate myself so that I can benefit my community and help others."

Having studied at four other institutions since her UT Martin years, Marsh has some perspective on how her UT Martin experience differed from that at other universities.

"I think I had the best set of professors at UT Martin. I've been to (other institutions), and I would still say that UT Martin had the professors that cared," she said. "The professors would stand out in the hallways and greet you; they would help you find your classes

"I've pushed cars out of the road. I've taken people to go get gas for their cars; I've moved deer that were hit and injured. Police officers do it all."

when you were a freshman. I've been to other college campuses where that did not happen."

UT Martin students also benefit from Marsh's experience and dedication to education. The Danita Marsh scholarship award, established in Marsh's honor by the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Metropolitan Nashville Chapter Inc., assists female African-American students in the criminal justice programs at UT Martin and Tennessee State University each year. UT Martin's 2016 award recipient, Alexa Orr, is a junior from Savannah and has chosen to study courts and law.

"I want to enter the criminal justice system and help transform it positively," said Orr. "This award will help me achieve my goals by allowing me to receive financial help to further my education. Also, by attending the Nashville Coalition of 100 Black Women Conference and having the opportunity to meet so many

inspirational women, such as officer Danita Marsh, this award has helped me become more determined to achieve my goal of becoming an attorney."

Orr plans to graduate in the spring of 2018 and hopes to attend Vanderbilt University Law School.

Tragedy struck that day in 2006, but 10 years later Marsh still hasn't let her injuries slow her down. For three years, she put her life on the line for the people of Davidson County and nearly lost it in the pursuit of justice. Marsh has a servant's heart, a trait fostered during her time at UT Martin, and remains dedicated to improving the world around her through the law enforcement system and the mediation process.



— FROM THE —
ARCHIVES

DR. WILLIAM PAUL MEEK



■ (above) Cheerleaders crowd into a convertible in a photograph from 1961. (right) A Tennessee Spirit Jug was a sign of school pride for many students.

WHETHER YOU consider yourself a Junior Volunteer, a Pacer or a Skyhawk, the history and tradition of the UT Martin spirit runs deep. Never is that spirit more prevalent than in the fall when campus is humming with activity and the leaves change from green to a vibrant Tennessee orange. From football games at Hardy M. Graham Stadium to rope pull at Pacer Pond and Quad City in the heart of campus, UT Martin pride can be found around every corner. "From the Archives" is a feature highlighting unique and interesting items from the Alliene and Jimmie S. Corbitt Special Collections. For more information or to make a donation, contact Special Collections and Archives at 731-881-7094 or speccoll@utm.edu. <<<

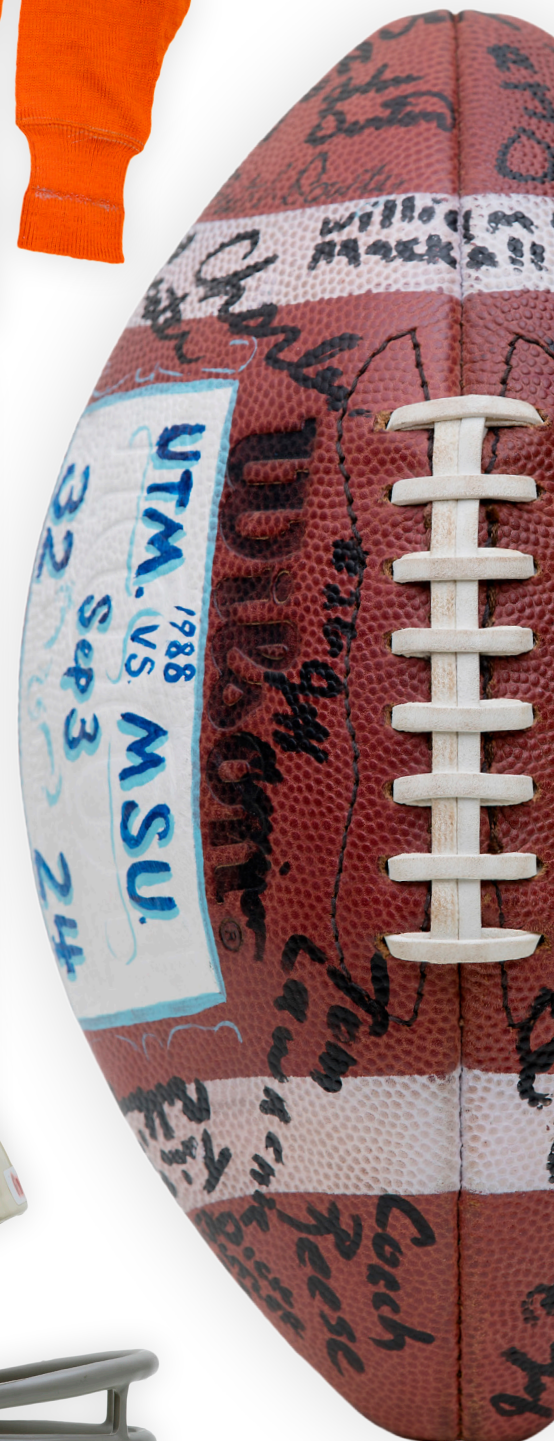




■ (left) Students could often be seen in spirited apparel like this women's cheer sweater from the University of Tennessee, Martin Branch era and a men's letterman sweater from the University of Tennessee Junior College era. Beanies like this one were often worn by freshmen.



■ (above) A painting by Phil Lively of the UT Martin Pacer mascot. (right) A 1970 era football helmet and a winning football from UT Martin's 1988 season opener against Murray State.



Economic Impact

Story by Erin Chesnut
Infographic by Beth Bodwell

UT Martin had a tremendous impact on the West Tennessee economy during the 2014-15 fiscal year, generating \$481.1 million in added income for the region. These results, based on a contracted study conducted by Economic Modeling Specialists International in Moscow, Idaho, illustrate the importance of maintaining a vibrant four-year university in Northwest Tennessee.

Released in March 2016, the study assesses the impact of university, student, visitor and alumni spending on the region and calculates the benefits generated by the university for students, taxpayers and society as a whole. The results of this study show that the added regional income generated by the university is equivalent to creating 8,074 new jobs.

University students, 23% of whom come from outside the region, generated approximately \$8 million in added income (the equivalent of creating 221 new jobs). Each student enrolled at UT Martin adds approximately \$10,026 in new income to the regional economy each year. Visitors to university-related events created an additional \$3.3 million in West Tennessee revenue throughout the year (81 new jobs).

Thousands of former UT Martin students are currently employed in West Tennessee, and the accumulated

STUDENTS
From 2014-2015,
UT Martin students added
\$8 Million
to the West Tennessee economy
= 200+ **new jobs**

\$3.40 earned for every \$1 spent on their degree
Amount each student added to W. TN
\$10,026

\$\$\$\$\$ 465 mil.
Amount 2014-2015 student body will earn over their working lives.

23% of UT Martin students come from *outside* W. TN

ALUMNI SPENDING
UT Martin Alumni added
\$\$\$\$\$ 374.9 mil.
Equivalent to creating
6000+ new jobs

financial impact of these alumni on the region's economy amounted to \$374.9 million in added income (6,301 new jobs).
The new Science and Engineering Building on UT Martin main campus will ignite new economic activity and add a total of \$21.6 million to the regional economy (406 new jobs), and the finished building's operational

Alumni from new STEM building will add
\$737.3 k annually
= 15 new jobs yearly

According to a contracted study by Economic Modeling Specialists International

of UT Martin on West Tennessee

VISITORS

UT Martin visitors added

\$3.3 Million

Equivalent to creating



80+ new jobs

OPERATIONAL SPENDING

UT Martin operational spending added

\$94.9 mil. to the West TN economy

Equivalent to creating



new jobs

To build new STEM building will add

\$21.6 mil = 400+ new jobs

To operate STEM building will add

\$\$\$812.8 k

annually



expenses will later add an estimated \$812.8 thousand in annual regional income.

UT Martin also creates a positive return on investments made by students, taxpayers and society as a whole.

Students who invest in an education from UT Martin earn an estimated \$3.40 for every dollar spent on their degree. This means the 2014-15 student body is estimated

to earn a collective \$465.1 million in increased income over their working lives as compared to what they would have earned had they not invested in a UT Martin degree.

Because of higher earnings, these graduates will also contribute approximately \$204.1 million to state and local tax revenues over their lifetimes, which earns the state a profit on the \$43.4 million in taxpayer funding provided to UT Martin during the analysis period. There will also be a decreased demand for government-funded social services in West Tennessee stemming from a better-educated workforce, which in turn saves the public sector an additional \$54.1 million in government costs.

Because of these factors, taxpayers receive an average of \$5.10 in return over these students' working lives for each dollar originally invested in their education at UT Martin. In return, the state will receive an estimated \$1.9 billion in added revenue over the course of the students' working lives.

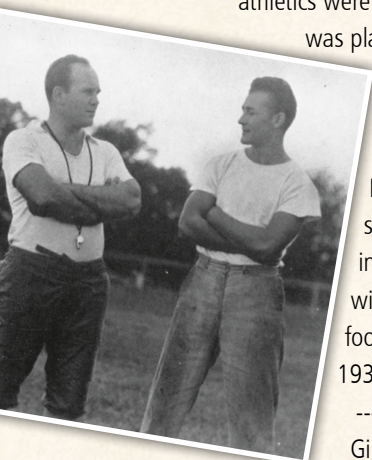
The EMSI report was financed by the city of Martin mayor's office, the Weakley County mayor's office, Weakley County Economic Development, USDA Rural Development, the Northwest Tennessee Development District and the Southwest Tennessee Development District.

Remembering UT Junior College Days

An interview with Nick Scruggs

Story by Bud Grimes

"In 1933, at the height of the great depression, all intercollegiate athletics were dropped because of inadequate funds. Emphasis was placed on intramurals, but students and the public were dismayed at the lack of intercollegiate competition. On Feb. 21, 1934, the UT Board of Trustees Committee on the Junior College met in Martin. County superintendents from Weakley and seven surrounding counties submitted a request for intercollegiate athletics to be reinstated. This along with several other requests was accommodated, and football resumed regular season play in the fall of 1934." – UT Martin Football Media Guide (2015)



Gibson County native Coleman Nichols "Nick" Scruggs attended UT Junior College for two quarters in 1934-35, and played football for two coaches who later became historic figures in Tennessee higher education. As a truck driver, World War II veteran and longtime business owner, he was not afraid of hard work.

In January 2016, Scruggs agreed to a Campus Scene interview while a patient at Cane Creek Rehabilitation Center in Martin. Even after all he accomplished and experienced during his long, eventful life, his children and grandchildren were his greatest joy.

Scruggs was born an only child on his grandfather's Fruitland farm where he was raised. He attended grade school in Fruitland and graduated from Trenton Peabody High School before attending UT Junior College. He died April 22, 2016, at the age of 98.

The following are edited questions and responses from interviews occurring Jan. 29 and Feb. 5, 2016.

What brought you to Martin?

Scruggs: "Well, I just wanted to go to college, and that was the closest one (UT Junior College) that had agriculture in it. I was here in 1934."



What was the campus like then?

Scruggs: "Well, it was small and nice. I didn't live on campus. I lived in what we called 'bachelors paradise.' It was 16 of us boys rented the house and had a cook."

What was it like for you to come from Fruitland to Martin? Was that a big step for you at the time?

Scruggs: "Yeah it was because, you know, I had played football at Peabody (Trenton Peabody High School). What little traveling I did was local schools, you know, to play ball. My folks didn't have much money, and we had plenty to eat but not a lot of money to spend otherwise."

Did you play all four years at Trenton Peabody?

Scruggs: "No, I played two full years. I was on the team, but I didn't play (the other two years). I didn't weigh but 147 pounds. ... When I went to school in the fall, I didn't have to practice to get my strength. My granddaddy put me across that log ... on the other end of a two-man crosscut saw. When I went to school, I was tough and ready to play anything because he got me in shape."

What kind equipment did you have? You had a helmet. Did you have a facemask?

Scruggs: "No. In a high school game in Jackson, Jackson Central Merry had a boy ... across the line from me, raised up and popped me right in the face, just my nose. I was in bad shape for a while. He didn't get by with it. About three downs after that, I raised up and caught him right behind the shoulder pad and put my knee in his face. It was tough going back then."

Who were your UTJC coaches?

Scruggs: "Everett Derryberry was head coach. Sonny Humphreys was the assistant coach. ... Sonny was a pistol. We'd have practice. He'd get down there in them shorts and his shoes and mix it up with us. ... Everett Derryberry was also a Rhodes Scholar." (Note - The 2015 UT Martin Football Media Guide notes that Everett Derryberry was hired in 1933 as head of the English Department. He first coached the football team in 1934 following the reinstatement of intercollegiate athletics. He was a former player at the University of Tennessee under Maj. Bob Neyland. Derryberry coached the UTJC to "its first undefeated season and a Mississippi Valley Conference championship in 1936." The guide says the 1934 team finished with a 7-1 record. Derryberry later served as president of Tennessee Tech and Humphreys as president

(top left) Everett Derryberry and Cecil "Sonny" Humphreys coached the 1934 UTJC football team (lower left). Nick Scruggs is pictured on the third row (right) standing next to Coach Derryberry.

of Memphis State, where the Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law is named for him.)

So you played one season at UTJC?

Scruggs: "One. I was the backup center. I wasn't on the first string. And this is the team that I remember. Charlie Vowell was the center. He was from here in Martin. ... There was a tackle named Billie (George) Zarecor. Billie was raised in Yorkville, and he didn't play high school football because he didn't have a team. But he played tackle. ... The quarterback was a Haggard Cherry from Henderson. ... A running back was ... from Martin. We called him Skeeter – Skeeter Ellis. He was good." (Note – George Zarecor has the distinction of being a sports hall of fame member at both UT Martin and the University of Memphis.)

What did you think about Coach Derryberry and Coach Humphreys?

Scruggs: "Great. Great people. After Sonny went to Memphis, and this was several years later because I was married and had a child, ... Humboldt was playing in the state tournament at Memphis State University, and my wife (the late Annie Ball Scruggs) and I went down there to a ballgame, and we were sitting up in the stands, and I saw Sonny coming around the court. ... And I got pretty close to him, and I said, 'Sonny.' And he turned around and looked at me, he said, 'Nick Scruggs.' ... I couldn't believe that after all those years he would recognize me. It makes you feel pretty good."

Where did you attend most of your UTJC classes?

Scruggs: "Well the only one I really remember is the ag building. But we had a Dr. (Edward) Schmidt ... he taught chemistry, and he was German. He couldn't see good, because he'd come to class sometimes with one color sock on, and on the other one was a different color. ... He was a character."

Mr. Scruggs was attending his second quarter at UTJC when the

Mississippi and Ohio rivers flooded in spring 1935. He recalled people came to Martin to avoid the flooding.

Scruggs: "The only way that I could get home from here was to go to Dresden and then go out that way because of the river overflowed between Greenfield and Bradford. ... Paducah was flooded bad, and everywhere around here was flooded. This

road was closed from here to Union City. ... It was rough."

Talk about your service in the Navy during World War II.

Scruggs: "I was working for JC Eaton Company (as a truck driver in Humboldt) in October of '42, and I left my wife and baby and volunteered for the Navy and spent 38 months, two years of it at sea. I was a ship's cook first class. I was on a seaplane tender, the U.S.S. Albemarle (AV-5)." (Note - He served on the Albemarle 1943-44 and part of 1945.)

What did you do as a ship's cook first class?

Scruggs: "We had 500 white hats (reference to the traditional white hats worn by the Navy). Three meals a day. The ship cooked first class. You had X number of men (cooking) according to how many men you're feeding. They did the actual cooking. I did the supervising, seeing it was done and done right. So we fed them three meals a day."

Was it pretty good food?

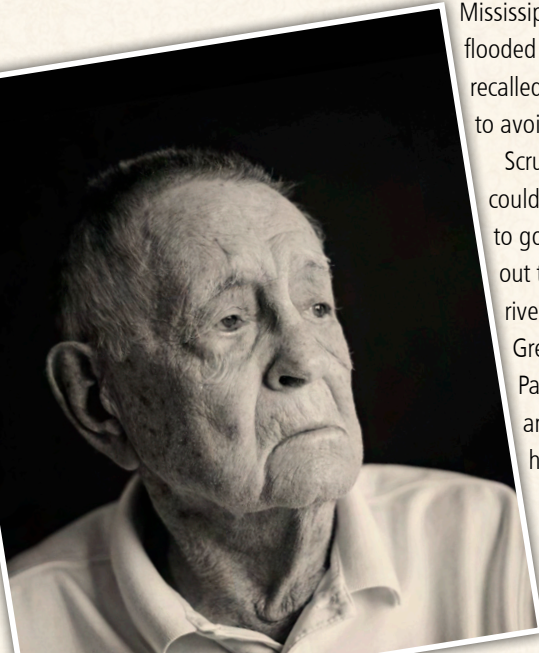
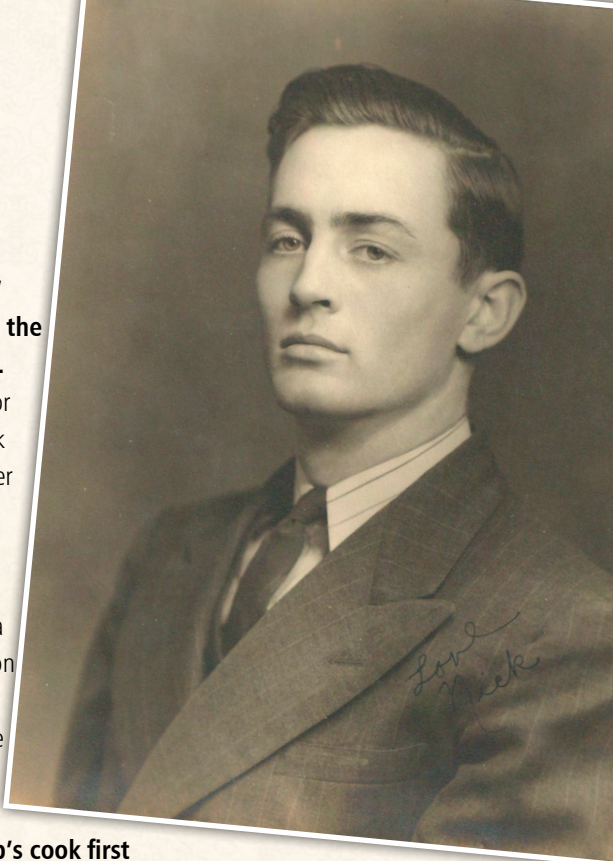
Scruggs: "Good food. Well, see what we'd do, we went to a port somewhere, and there was another Navy ship there, and the boys that was doing the cooking, they said, 'When chow time comes, we're going to have a long line.' ... I said, 'They heard that the Albemarle was in port, and they're coming to get your good food that you cooked.' Every port we went in we had the same problem."

What did you do after you left the Navy?

Scruggs: (He was working another job and was approached about acquiring a small dairy.) "It was a processing plant. They had about six farmers that brought milk in. We had pretty good routes in town, and I stayed there – I'm not sure about the length of time – somewhere between 35 and 40 years that I run that little dairy (Humboldt Milk Company). And I quit when I was 70 years old."

So what are your secrets for living a long life?

Scruggs: "I tell these boys that ask me that, I say, 'Well, I don't know. I've done most everything that everybody else has done.' ... I've got five grandchildren. All five of them graduated from college. All of the spouses graduated from college. And I've got 12 great grandchildren. ... So, what more could a man ask for than that?"



(left) Nick Scruggs in 2016 and (upper right) his high school graduation picture.

FAMOUS CONCERTS

Story by **Hannah Stewart**

Bo Diddley Paul Revere and The Raiders We Five
Prince Lewis & The Yardbirds Jimmy Clanton **Train** Gary
Pharaohs Four Seasons Sam the Sham & the
Jorge Morel Serendipity Singers Charlie Rich
Willie Mitchell Don Bryant The Righteous Brothers
Frankie Valli & the Four Seasons James
Brown Sam and Dave The Vogues Tams Revue
Stevie Wonder Furry Lewis Sleepy John Revue
Kenny Rogers **Ray Charles** Gary Estes
Bar-Kays Swinging Medallions The Association
The Temptations Sister Rose Set The Happenings Black Oak
Arkansas The Cornelius Brothers **Randy Travis**
Hanger Harpo Storm 1932 P
Dr. Hook Grass

For “The Longest Time,” concerts were “Nothin’ But A Good Time” at UT Martin. Everyone wanted to “Walk Like A Man” and party like it was “1999.”

Billy Joel, Poison, Frankie Valli and Prince are just a few of the big names who visited Martin during the years when students and community members gathered on campus to listen to some of the greatest artists of all time.

Each concert has its own unique story. Once, a large crowd pushed down the doors in the fieldhouse because they

were so excited to hear Molly Hatchet. On another occasion, the Hall and Oates show almost didn’t happen because of a financial dispute resolved only five minutes before show time. Fans at the Prince concert were in awe when he mingled with the audience before performing. Then, there was the Poison concert where the bleachers swayed back and forth under the crowd.

UT Martin had great venues, up-to-date equipment and outstanding employees, but the market began to change around 2000.

According to Tim Barrington and David Belote, both of whom played large roles in the concerts, promoters stopped coming to Martin because “the notable acts were seeking venues with greater seating capacities in order to maximize potential along with seeking higher guarantee.”

While famous concerts may have ended at UT Martin, the memories from when they came will last forever.



Olivia Newton-John - 1974



Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons - 1969



Billy Joel - 1977

The Roots Lewis Jimmy
 King Denny Brooks Blood, Sweat, Tears
 Sky King Marshall Tucker
Speedwagon Wind Edition Sleepy Hollow
 Holloway Rare Prairie Possee
Manilow Band Earth Dave Liggins **REO**
 Outlaws Confusion Charlie Daniels
 Freddie Sawyer Jerry Wet Willie The
 Dees Henry Gross White Sugarloaf
Phoebe Snow Head East **Billy Joel**
Pablo Cruise Molly Hatchet David
 Williams Mickey Gilley Don Williams
Morris Day and The Time and
 Troutman .38 Special Hank Rogers
 Setimi and Zoot Suit **Jefferson**
Starship Clint Black Alan Jackson
Tim McCraw Trisha Yearwood Sin
 Bad Lewis Black Jeff Dunham
 Cheap Trick John Waite Lee
 Greenwood Kathy Mattea Inner
 Circle **Poison** Slaughter
Vince Gill



Prince - 1982



Paul Revere and the Raiders - 1965



Poison - 1991







Ray Williams
POWER lifter

Story by **Nathan Morgan**

Photos by **Raffe Lazarian**

“Do it for your babies, Ray. Let’s go!” yells a voice from the crowd as **Ray Williams ('09)** approaches the bar at the International Powerlifting Federation’s World Championships in Killeen, Texas.

Williams is preparing to squat 965 pounds of raw steel — a world record.

The crowd goes quiet as he shoulders the bar and lowers his body. But as he stands back up, the audience explodes! Williams has just broken the world squat record — the one he set himself last year.

Not the typical place to find a business administration major from UT Martin. But for Williams, shouldering more than 900 pounds is just another day at the office.

“I never would have thought that I’d be where I am now. I mean one of the strongest people in the world? Like, of all time? ... But that just shows you how good God is and how far He’ll take you if you remain steadfast,” he said.

Williams didn’t have a strong father figure in his life as a young boy and often found himself searching for male role models. Because of this, he has vowed things will be different for his sons, Tae Sean, 8, and Daniel, 6.

“When it comes to my kids, I don’t want them to experience

what I went through,” said Williams. “I always want to be Superman to my kids. Always. All of us are not going to be rich ... we’re not going to be famous superstars, so we all want to leave some kind of legacy — something for our kids to say ‘my daddy did this,’” he said.

At 6 feet, 400 pounds, this Demopolis, Ala., native is relatively new to the sport of powerlifting. Williams broke onto the scene in 2012 after being encouraged by his brother, William Burrell, to try the sport. He won a national and a world championship in his first year.

While his strength may amaze some, it came as no surprise to Williams, who had been lifting since his days at Demopolis High.

His high school football team, the Tigers, only lost eight games during Ray’s four-year career, and they won the state high school football championship in 2004. “We were pretty much unstoppable,” said Williams. The Tigers also had the most points scored in a single season that year (761), a record that stands to this day.

In 2005, Williams was recruited to play football for UT Martin. He was used to being a champion, and he was pleased to find that several of his Skyhawk teammates shared this same mentality.

“All of us were winners. We didn’t know anything else. It



“I **always** want to
be **Superman** to my kids.”





bothered us to lose," he said.

Williams focused on football during his first two years at UT Martin, and he helped his team win the OVC championship in 2006.

But, despite his many football victories, Williams feels his most valuable experiences at UT Martin came to him off the field.

"If you're the type of person who is goal-oriented, after two years at UTM, your mentality is going to start focusing on what needs to be done to graduate," he said.

So, Williams began focusing on his academic work. He also pledged Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, which he credits as a major networking tool for him throughout his life.

"UT Martin ... can be whatever you want to make it. Your time there will be defined by who you involve yourself with and what you get into," he said.

After graduating from UT Martin, Williams joined the Skyhawks as a graduate assistant for the defensive line coach. After two more years in Martin, he accepted his first coaching job at the University of West Alabama and later moved into his current position as strength coordinator and defensive line coach at Itawamba Community College in Fulton, Miss.

During his time in Fulton, Williams earned a Master of Science in recreation and sports administration with a concentration in interscholastic athletic administration and coaching from Western

Kentucky University. He is currently working on a doctorate in educational leadership at the University of Memphis.

In addition to his squatting record, Williams also holds the world record for his combined squat, bench and deadlift total — a staggering 2,299 pounds. However, for Williams, two world records aren't enough. His ultimate goal is to be the first person to squat 1,000 pounds under drug tested conditions in just knee sleeves.

"If I invest my time in something, I want to be the best. I know it sounds shallow and selfish, but if you're not doing it to be the best, then why are you doing it?" he said.

As it stands, Williams plans to continue coaching, but is leaving himself open to a future in powerlifting.

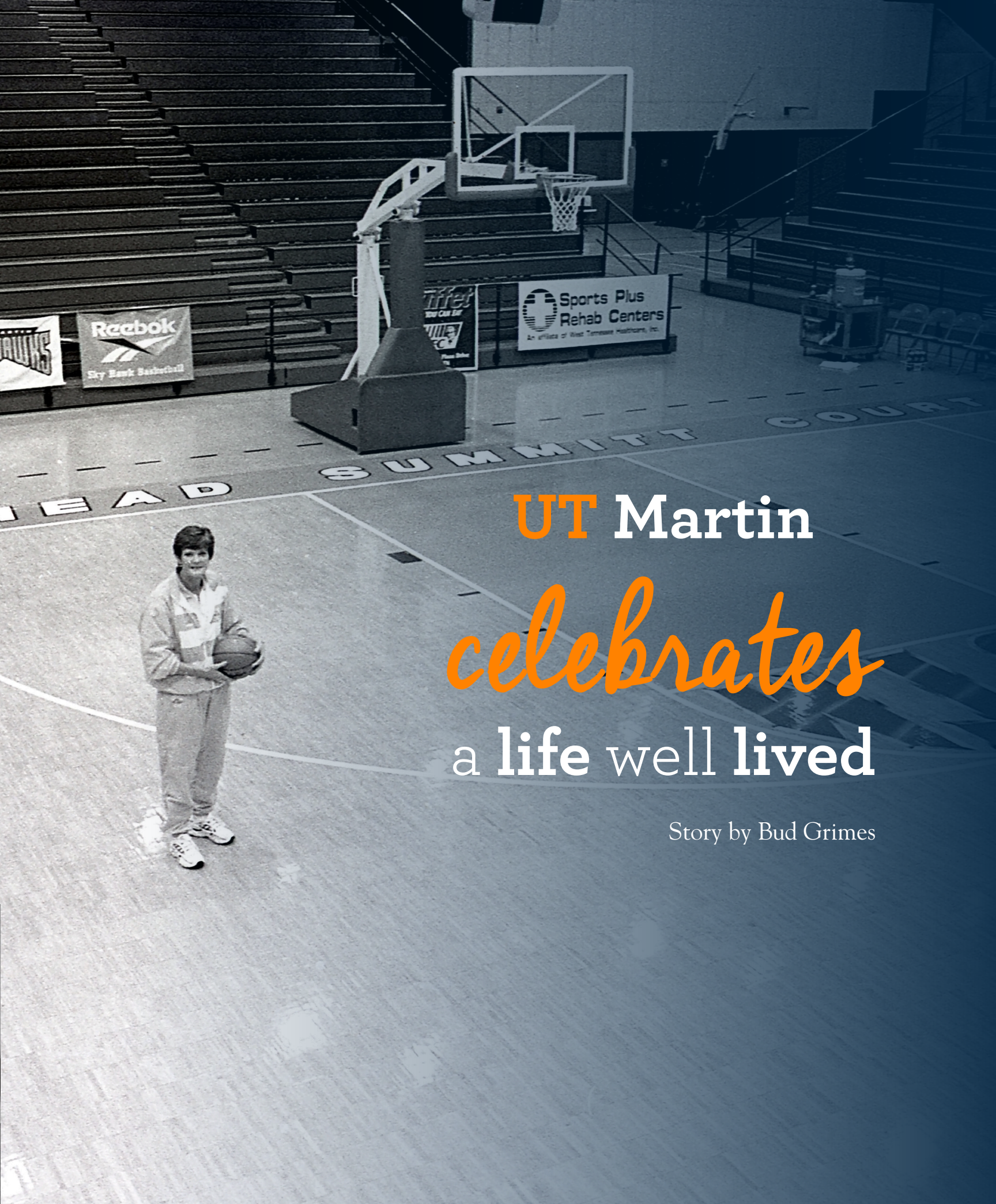
"Right now, football coaching pays the bills, so I'm a football coach first and a powerlifter second. When the tides begin to change ... we'll see," he said.

For now, though, Williams is taking life one pound at a time.

Editor's Note: On the night before going to print, *Campus Scene* learned that Williams unofficially broke the 1,000-pound barrier. In a video posted to Instagram, Williams, stated "All I can say is 1000 lbs!!!! God is good!!! It's Money Time!!!" Follow Williams as he continues to break records on Instagram (@optimusprime_334) and Facebook (@RayWilliams86).







UT Martin

celebrates

a life well lived

Story by Bud Grimes

Pat Head Summitt's struggle with early onset dementia ended June 28, 2016, when she died in Knoxville at the age of 64. News of the winningest college basketball coach's passing touched people around the world, including those in Martin and at her alma mater, the University of Tennessee at Martin.

UT Martin was part of Coach Summitt's story, and when a Celebration of Life to honor Summitt was announced for July 14 at Thompson-Boling Arena in Knoxville, the university made plans to share the experience. Watkins Auditorium provided the venue for the live webcast of the event, while the university's new Welcome Center hosted a post-event reception featuring memorabilia from Summitt's life.

Appropriately, the Skyhawk women's basketball team welcomed attendees who came to celebrate and honor one of UT Martin's own.

Chris Brinkley ('00), radio voice of the Skyhawks, served as emcee and offered opening remarks before the webcast began. He told about Bettye Giles, retired director of women's athletics, and the late Nadine Gearin, UT Martin women's basketball coach, watching Summitt play basketball in high school and develop as a player.

"Sometimes you know in life, when you look back at your own life, and realize that things just kind of fall into place," Brinkley said. "The timing is perfect. . . . And for Pat, it was Bettye and Nadine and the UT Martin family that kind of happened that way."

Brinkley spoke with Giles before the celebration, and she said Summitt arrived in Martin much like other freshmen, "kind of scared and with a suitcase full of clothes that country girls wore in the country." Brinkley also asked Giles for a basketball scouting report on the future coaching legend. "She (Summitt) put the ball on the floor, she put her elbows out, and she took it to the goal," Giles told Brinkley. "And if you were in her way, you got out of her way."

"One of the best stories Ms. Bettye told me was about former UT Martin basketball coach, men's basketball coach Floyd Burdette," Brinkley added. "We needed a new player or two to fill out our roster, and he was having open tryouts for players on campus to see if they could make the team, and he looked at Ms. Bettye and he said, 'Don't you let that Pat Head try out for my basketball team, because she's liable to make it.'"

Brinkley closed his comments by referencing Summitt's 2005 commencement address in the Elam Center. "She said four of the best years of her life were spent right here on this campus. . . . 'My UT Martin family saw so much more in me than I saw in myself.' And a lot of you are here right now," he added.

The program from Knoxville was filled with music, testimonials

and video tributes offered by a lineup of Summitt's notable friends, including ABC television's Robin Roberts, former UT Vol and Denver Bronco quarterback Peyton Manning, and many former players and coaching associates. UT Martin Interim Chancellor Bob Smith and his wife, Ramona along with Bettye Giles and others, traveled from West Tennessee to join the celebration in person. "We back Pat," said Robin Roberts. "That's why we're here tonight." UT President Emeritus Joe Johnson added in his video tribute, "Pat Summitt was a remarkable example to everyone around her."

Back in Martin, those in the audience applauded, laughed and fought back tears as the tributes and stories about Summitt filled Watkins Auditorium. The gathering offered a time for grieving, healing and remembering a friend and role model.

Donna Wilson, of Martin, traces her friendship with Pat Summitt back to the 1970s when they both attended UT Martin. They met when Wilson pledged Summitt's beloved Chi Omega Sorority. Wilson said Summitt encouraged others "to surround yourself with positive people," and it was her personal determination that made Summitt successful. "Oh my gosh, the most determined, competitive human being I've ever met, and she was determined to make a difference, and she did," said Wilson.

Emily Eubank, of Murfreesboro, transferred to the Skyhawk women's basketball team from Lipscomb University in Nashville. She joined her team members welcoming attendees to the celebration, and she believes the drive to succeed made Summitt successful. "I think she was never satisfied, kind of like her assistants were talking about (during the celebration event)," Eubank said. "She didn't ever want her players to ever be comfortable. She always was striving for greatness and wasn't going to settle for anything less, so I think that's why she was great."

Linda Fisher ('95) drove from Milan to honor Summitt. "I have met Pat Summitt several times," Fisher said. "I have all of her books autographed from her, and she just impressed me with her very first book." The registered nurse believes Summitt had a simple approach to being successful. "Her common sense, her country values, her family values, just to work hard. To succeed, you have to work hard all the time," she said.

As he offered a moving tribute to his mother, Tyler Summitt said she had three hearts: the heart of a mother, a heart for others and a heart for Jesus. Her West Tennessee family might add that she also had a heart for her alma mater, the University of Tennessee at Martin. God Bless, Coach Summitt, and thank you.



You Never Walk Alone

Six UT Martin alumnae give advice on life after graduation

Story by Erin Chesnut, Photos by Nathan Morgan



It's graduation day. The black-robed students outside the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center are so excited, hurrying to and fro, snapping pictures with family and friends, frantically checking their watches. Some come rushing in, gowns flying behind them, to find their spots in line at the last minute.

Twice a year, UT Martin gathers to celebrate those students who have earned the right to cross the commencement stage and receive their diplomas. We applaud their accomplishments and wish them well in their future lives.

News stories and magazines often feature those alumni who sponsor buildings, erect monuments and support a university financially after successful careers. But what about those who are just starting out? What about the 700-plus students who crossed the UT Martin commencement stage May 7?

Campus Scene sat down with six alumnae leaders to find out what new graduates can do to further their careers and stay involved with the UT Martin community after their tassels are turned.

Getting Started

"The first thing is, you've got to look inside yourself and find that strength to focus on the talents that you do have. Then find those advisers, find those instructors, who will put you on the right path and in the right direction," said **Tonya Horner Parson ('93)**. Parson, a nurse practitioner and owner of Passport Health in Memphis, is president of the UT Martin Black Alumni Council.

"You don't always know what you want to be. I thought I wanted to be a physician all my life, but my path was changed to be a nurse practitioner, and I love it," she said. "I knew that caring for people ... was where I needed to be and where I wanted to be. But how to get there, I wasn't so sure. So you've just got to reach out to those people that are your support, whether those people are here on campus or out in the community."

"You need to set a goal, and you need to figure out how you're going to accomplish that goal. Figure out what you're good at, what you're interested in, and find out how to make a career out of it," added **Shannon Sensing Cotter ('88)**, owner of SIC Project Management in Memphis and current president of the UT Martin Alumni Council.

Betsy Brasher ('98), president-elect of the University of Tennessee Alumni Association, advises new graduates to be patient in their careers and take the ladder one rung at a time. "Remember that your career is a marathon, not a race. It takes preparation; it takes planning and training. It takes dedication and hard work," she said. "I did not get to be in my role the first year out of school

or even five years out of school. ... You just keep pushing forward. You be the best that you can be in your current role, and then you set your sights on the next role and you figure out what you need to do to get there, whether it's for your current company or for somewhere else."

Brasher is a senior vice president and relationship manager for the corporate regional banking department of First Tennessee Bank, a company she has worked with since graduating from UT Martin.

All the women interviewed have successful careers, but despite their personal accomplishments, each one stressed the value of career and life mentors.

"Some of these people, in my (UT Martin) experience, they saw something in me that I didn't see in myself. I may not have been confident enough at that point to do it or to say something about it, but they said, 'You know what? You could be a leader. You ought to think about running for an office in something,'" said **Dr. Chandra West Alston ('93)**. Alston, UTAA treasurer, is associate vice chancellor for human resources at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis.

"I think the faculty and staff here (at UT Martin) are top-notch. They care about you as a person as well as a student. I went through college, and I can remember almost everybody who touched my life. ... All these people who really poured into my life – not just my academic life, but my personal life," she said.

"You're not alone. You're never more than a phone call away from that connection, that mentor, that coach," added **Claire Davis Wade ('95)**, interior designer and owner of Claire & Schuster Interiors in Martin. Wade is president of the UTAA Women's Council.

It's easy to look at the accomplishments of people around you and compare yourself negatively. However, these women agree that success comes in many forms.

"We should value our individual paths instead of being jealous or worrying about whatever somebody else has done," said Alston.

"You can either be your own best friend or your own worst enemy. Don't let yourself be intimidated," said **Rachel Stephens ('11)**, chair of the UT Martin Young Alumni Council and interim Greek life coordinator at UT Martin. Stephens, the youngest of the group, admitted to having some reservations about meeting the other alumni leaders, but quickly realized she has more in common with these women than she thought.

"My success doesn't have to look like yours for both of us to be successful. ... I wouldn't be here if I didn't have something to offer," she said.

"Everyone has something to offer," said Cotter. "Pattern yourself



after successful people. Emulate them, follow them around, even if you have to do it free of charge. Learn from your successes, and learn from your failures. Failure is not a person; it is an event. Learn from it, gain knowledge from it and move on."

Getting Involved

"The Young Alumni Council is really the first opportunity for alumni to get engaged with the university and start giving back once they've officially crossed that graduation stage," said Stephens. "Sometimes I think that's a population of alumni that we forget about, because when you think of alumni you think of billionaires in their 80s, not 25 or 26-year-olds who were deeply impacted by their university.

"It's so important that we bridge the gap between what happens when you cross the stage and 15 years from now when you suddenly want to start getting involved again," she continued.

The UT Martin Young Alumni Council is designed for those who have graduated within the past 10 years. The council reaches out to young alumni and tries to keep them connected to the university and involved with their local branches of the UT Martin or UTAA organizations. Many young alumni hesitate to become involved with an alumni organization because the first assumption is that support is all financial. However, Stephens proves that is not the case.

"I graduated and said, 'Well, I'm not retired with a successful business where I can give money back. So what else can I do?'" she said. "A former alumni president talked to us about the three Ts – your time, your talent and your treasure. And that really impacted me because, as a 28-year-old, I don't have a huge amount of treasure at this point in my life. But I have time, and I'd like to think I have talent that I can give back to the university. That's why I got involved.

"It's so important for young alumni to see from that very first day that they don't have to be giving millions of dollars every year; they can just show up. ... There are so many things I can do to give back to this university that made me who I am," she said.

Alumni of all ages can be involved and stay connected with other graduates in their area and form relationships with people who have experienced the same UT Martin advantages.

"There's always an instant connection when you hear, 'Oh, I went to UT Martin, too!' Even now," said Brasher.

"I have patients that come in who are getting ready to come up here or who are already up here on campus, and I tell them, 'Oh, I went to UT Martin,' and right there we start talking. They want to know, 'Was it like this when you were there?' It's an automatic

(from top) Betsy Brasher, Tonya Parson, Shannon Cotter

connection,” said Parson.

“No matter what part of UT Martin you look at, we all tell the same story,” said Stephens.

“What we do here (in the UT System) is phenomenal throughout the state,” said Alston. “Whether it’s at the health science center or here in Martin or in Chattanooga or Knoxville, or at the space center and our other institutes ... making sure everybody knows about those and are aware is important.”

University alumni are the best and most effective cheerleaders for any institution, and UT Martin alumni are encouraged to share their college experiences with the upcoming generation.

“We are of the generation now that our children are getting ready to pick a college; so if this college was good enough for us to obtain our degrees, and we’ve done well and succeeded, then we should be encouraging our kids to come back and do the same thing,” said Parson.

“UT Martin provided me something; it provided me with a gateway to do what I’m doing as a professional now,” said Cotter, who focuses on community development planning in rural areas. “I don’t think I would have gotten that at Memphis State (University). I don’t think I would have gotten it at Knoxville. ... I don’t think I would have had the rural focus or the rural impact that I have strived for in my career if I’d not come to UT Martin. ... It’s that sense of belonging. (UT) Martin provided me with an opportunity; it was up to me to take advantage of it.”

“Once I got here, I loved the fact that you were able to get the private school education for a public school price. It felt like a community; it felt like home,” said Stephens. “I wanted to be a big fish in a small pond. I wanted my teachers to know me by name; I wanted my administrators to know me by name. That’s ultimately why I chose Martin.”

Staying Connected

There are alumni chapters around the world for UT Martin and University of Tennessee graduates. To find a UTAA chapter or event in your area, including those hosted through the UTAA Women’s Council, visit utaconnect.com and select “Find Your Chapter.”

To connect with UT Martin graduates near you, including those through the black alumni and young alumni councils, visit utmforever.com and select “Get Involved.” For additional contact information for the UT Martin Office of Alumni Relations, see page 49.

(from top) Dr. Chandra Alston, Claire Wade, Rachel Stephens



ALUMNI NEWS

the real deal

It has been rumored among my close friends that I only work one week a year – homecoming week! As much as I would love for that to be the case, it is not. The UT Martin alumni office was recently provided an opportunity to offer greater services to our alumni regarding annual giving and chapters. Your alumni team met those challenges and strives to make your alumni experience more enjoyable – 365 days a year.

One such transformative project has been the construction of new sorority lodges on campus! This was such an exciting project largely because of the volunteers who gave 110% of their energy to raise funding for their lodges. It was exciting to see alumnae get engaged in the annual giving process and provide funding for their new chapter homes.

Occasionally, things do not go as planned, and we have to regroup. While the lodges were not ready for this year's recruitment festivities, rest assured the university is making every effort to ensure this project is completed in a timely fashion and that each lodge meets our high standards for construction.

To the hundreds of alumnae who have donated to this project...thank you. This is a revolutionary project for Greek Life and for undergraduate women participating in our sororities. I hope you will take time to visit Sorority Village on your next trip to Martin, even if you were not Greek, because it shows the university's commitment to providing a student experience that is second to none.

Always continue to think of how you can impact your alma mater, because there is no bad idea when it comes to improving our campus and our university as a whole. And remember, always #beutmpride! Share exciting news from your fellow alumni with the world, and make sure everyone you know knows what an incredible institution UT Martin truly is. And, until you return to campus, know that your alumni team is ready to serve you 365 days a year.

Charly Deal
('92, '96)

SEE MORE ONLINE
For the most up-to-date information, news and event schedules, check out the alumni website at utmforever.com.



spotlight on alums

GET INVOLVED!

As a UT Martin alum, your continued engagement and involvement are critical to our success. Your personal commitment of time, talent and treasure will ensure our future growth and success. Visit our website to discover meaningful ways you can impact your university.

- > Volunteer Opportunities
- > Reunions
- > Alumni Council
- > Development Council
- > Mentoring Program
- > Young Alumni Council
- > Speak Out for UT
- > Alumni in the Classroom

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Office of Alumni Relations
Dunagan Alumni Center
1900 Alumni Way
Martin, TN 38238
(731) 881-7610
alumni@utm.edu



Shane Stephens ('85) was elected National Cotton Council chairman for 2016 during the council's annual meeting Feb. 5-7 in Dallas, Texas. Stephens, of Greenwood, Miss., is vice president of Staplcotn's cotton services and warehouse divisions. Overall, he is responsible for 25 office and warehouse locations throughout the mid-south and southeastern United States. According to an NCC press release, Stephens was a member of the council's 1994-95 Cotton Leadership Program and has served as president of the program's alumni association. He also served as vice president representing the warehouse segment from 2007-12 and served on the board of directors from 2001-05 and 2013-14. Stephens holds a bachelor of science degree in agriculture from UT Martin. He and his wife, Janet, have two daughters and one son.

spotlight on alums



Christina Kirby ('06) who holds a bachelor's degree in agriculture with a concentration in animal science, currently manages the American Quarter Horse Association's leading cutting sire, High Brow Cat, and the entire equine program for Colt Ventures. Before joining the cutting horse industry, she was a veterinary technician at the North Carolina State Veterinary Teaching Hospital. Christina joined the newly opened Weatherford Equine Breeding Hospital in Weatherford, Texas, in 2010 as the office manager and was there through the 2014 season.



Dr. Karen J. Wheeler ('79) has joined Arkansas State University as the senior associate vice chancellor for academic affairs. Wheeler spent the past five years as associate vice chancellor for academic affairs at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, where she was the provost's leader in areas related to curriculum and degree programs, new off-site locations, program review and institutional assessment. She received her bachelor's degree from UT Martin before earning a master's degree in psychology from Austin Peay State University and completing post-master's work in educational administration at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She later received a doctoral degree in educational administration and higher education supervision at Bowling Green State University. She has had an extensive career with the Arkansas Department of Higher Education and held administrative positions at the University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville, Ark.; Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, Mo.; and Paul Quinn College in Waco, Texas. (Information courtesy Arkansas State University)

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in memory

Carolyn Boling, of Knoxville, passed away April 16, 2016 (wife of the late Dr. Edward Boling, University of Tennessee president emeritus).

Lisa March-Deberry, of Jackson, passed away June 1, 2016 (current student).

Mary Elder Fowler, of Martin, passed away March 12, 2016 (former UTM employee).

Robert "Andy" Hopgood, of Dyersburg, passed away June 5, 2016 (former UTM employee and Campus Scene editor).

Barrett Michelle Horton, of McKenzie, passed away May 20, 2016 (former UTM faculty member).

Sandra Marie Feustal Koch, of Martin, passed away Aug. 31, 2016 (UTM faculty member).

Phillip Trey Lindsey, of Medon, passed away July 12, 2016.

Rege Keenan Luckey, of Humboldt, passed away March 18, 2016.

Coy Michael Lutz, of Howard, Pa., passed away May 28, 2016 (current student).

Dr. Tricia C. Satkowski, of Germantown, passed away June 28, 2016.

Coleman Nichols Scruggs, of Humboldt, passed away April 22, 2016 (see related story, page 32).

Judy Taylor, of Bolivar, Mo., passed away March 26, 2016.

Jacob Cole Tenison, of Hohenwald, passed away March 17, 2016.

Bill Terry, of Dickson, passed away Jan. 26, 2016.

we want to know

Please fill out the information below and mail it to us, or visit utmforever.com to update your address and let us know what you've been doing.

Full Name (include maiden name, if applicable): _____

Years Attended: _____ through _____ School/College of: _____

Degree(s): _____ Major: _____

Home Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Occupation: _____ Business Name or Employer: _____

Business Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Your Email Address: _____

Would you like your Email address published in Campus Scene? Yes No

Full Name of Spouse: _____

Did your spouse attend UT Martin? Yes No

Years Attended: _____ through _____ School/College of: _____

Degree(s): _____ Major: _____

Occupation: _____ Business Name of Employer: _____

Business Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Spouse's Email Address: _____

Names and Ages of Children: _____

Additional News (honors, promotions, etc.): _____

List your current hobbies: _____

Would you consider taking an active leadership role in UT Martin alumni activities? Yes No

Would you like this information published in Campus Scene? Yes No

If you know anyone who may be interested in UT Martin and is a high school junior or senior, please give us his or her name and address.

Enclose a recent color headshot photo, if possible. No low-resolution digital photos, please! Photographs cannot be returned to you. Every effort will be made to use all color headshots submitted. However, space considerations and/or photo quality may prevent us from using submitted photos in some instances. Email photos to alumni@utm.edu.

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Martin, TN 38238

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class notes

1964

Claud Mitchell ('64) is retired from John Deere and living in Louisiana. His wife, **Carol Mitchell ('83)**, taught special education for 26 years after receiving her UT Martin degree. The couple has seven children, nine grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

1967

Robert Paschall ('67) is a pediatric professor emeritus at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Mo. He is also retired from his position as medical director of the Child Protection Program at St. Louis Children's Hospital.

1969

Patrick Murdock ('69) is retired from Roadway Express and currently the minister at Antioch Baptist Church in Union City. He is celebrating 50 years of marriage to **Connie Haley Murdock ('66)**.

1970

Jamison Jenkins ('70) is retired after 30 years of service with the UT Agriculture Extension. He is also representing Tennessee district 94 in the Tennessee House of Representatives for the current term. Jenkins and his wife, Jean, live in Somerville.

1971

Emily Lovings ('71) retired in May 2016 after spending 30 years as an elementary school librarian with Humboldt City Schools.

1973

Garry Elliott ('73) taught agriculture at Waverly Central High School for 40 years and retired in 2012.

1974

Anita Carol Chambers Boscacny ('74) is a retired school psychologist. She worked with Memphis City Schools for 34 years. She is currently the Chickasaw District director for the Tennessee Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. She and her husband, Michael, live in Cordova.

1976

Rachel Cashion Young ('76) is a registered nurse with Methodist Healthcare in Memphis. She also serves as president of the Memphis chapter of the Emergency Nurses Association. She and her husband, Bobby, live in Brighton and have two grown children: Ashley Cashion Scott and Robert Young III. Their grandson, Cashion, is five years old. Email: RCY54@aol.com

1980



Frances Smith Ellis ('80, above, left) earned an associate degree in nursing from UT Martin and later received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Maryville University in St. Louis, Mo., in 1986. She and her husband, Steven, have three grown children and live in Crawfordville, Fla.

1982

José Basagoitia ('82) returned to his home country of El Salvador after receiving a master's degree in business administration from UT Martin. He then became the first vice president of El Salvador's Central Reserve Bank, served as general manager for several other major banks, worked with USAID projects and taught master's courses at local universities. At age 70, he currently consults for his firm, JB Consultores. Email: jabasagoitia@gmail.com

1985

Mark DuPriest ('85) is a courier for FedEx in Brentwood and currently lives in Nashville.

2002



Lori Greene McClain ('02, '16) is a fifth-grade science teacher with the West Carroll Special School District. She completed her master's degree from UT Martin in May 2016 with a focus on geoscience education.

2003



Michelle Brown Newton ('03, above, right) is a claims examiner with Bell and Clements Inc., based in Reston, Va. She has been awarded the Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter designation and diploma through The Institutes for successfully completing courses and examinations on risk management principles, insurance policy contracts and coverage analysis. She and her husband, Daniel, live in Sevierville with their two children.

2004

Beth Parnell ('04) is the new director of public relations and communications at West Tennessee Healthcare. She originally joined the company in 2014 and moved through the ranks as organizational communications manager, media relations manager and interim director of marketing and communications.

2007



Jennifer Nipp Crowley ('07, above, left) is living in Huntsville, Ala., with her new husband, John E. Crowley III.

2009

Casey Lee Ridener ('09) is the business practice manager for the Speech and Hearing Clinic, Department of Communicative Disorders and Sciences, at the University of Buffalo in Amherst, N.Y. She received her Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Buffalo in May 2016 and is engaged to **Stuart Clint Dowland ('04)**. Dowland also holds a Master of Arts degree in philosophy from the University of Buffalo. Email: Cridener@gmail.com

2012



Chance Finegan ('12) and his wife, **Kate Hein Finegan ('10)**, live in Toronto, Canada. Chance is working on his doctorate degree in park management at York University, and Kate is a critical reading and writing instructor for the International Foundations Program at the University of Toronto.

2014

Spencer Bowers ('14) was named the new Tennessee Democratic Party communications director in January 2016. He holds a bachelor's degree in political science.



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STUDENT SPOTLIGHT >>> Cody Jarman ('15), Fulbright scholar, *Cumberland Furnace*



Jarman (right) is shown participating in a Vanguard Theatre production of "One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest."

>>> When Cody Jarman ('15) participated in a UT Martin travel-study to Ireland in 2013, he had no idea that trip across the Atlantic would change his life.

Now, a Fulbright Scholarship, one of the first awarded to a UT Martin alum, is sending Jarman back to the Emerald Isle to study Irish literature and film at University College Cork.

"Being able to see firsthand Ireland's struggle to find and define itself through its art drew me in," he said. "From Jonathan Swift and Oscar Wilde to James Joyce and William Butler Yeats, it's difficult

to study English without being inundated with Irish literature."

The Cumberland Furnace native received one of nine awards to support study in Ireland. He and his new wife, fellow alum **Madilyn Peay ('16)**, began their journey in early September and will return in time for Jarman to begin a doctoral program in English at the University of Texas at Austin next fall.

"I actually hope to end up teaching at a small, primarily undergraduate university, ideally something like UT Martin, where I can be the same kind of supportive mentor

that many of my UT Martin professors have been to me," he said.

The Fulbright Scholarship Program is named after J. William Fulbright, who spent more than 30 years in the U.S. Congress and remains the longest-serving chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, even after his death in 1995. The program, founded in 1946, has sponsored thousands of students and professionals in all areas of study who wish to learn and work in other countries.

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